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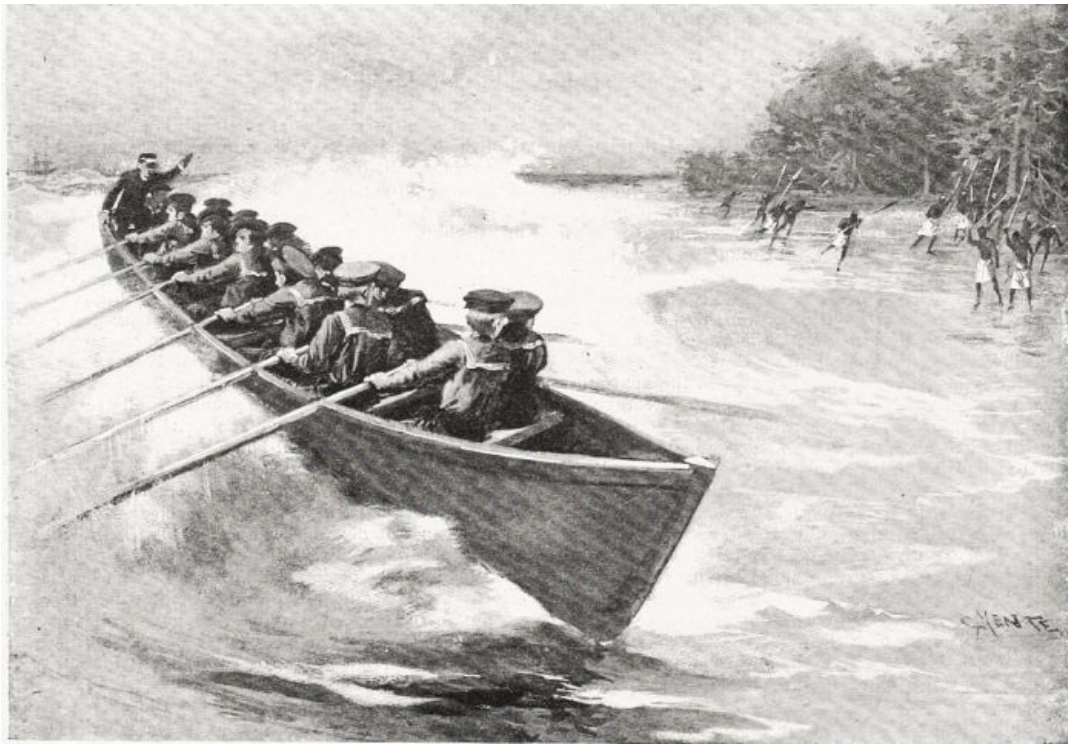
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CHRISTMAS ON MAJUBA STATION.

BY RICHARD BARRY.

December on the Majuba coast, and the day had been the hottest of the month, as the log-book entry showed.

It was a few minutes past sundown, and the awnings that had covered the decks of the old steam-frigate *Sumter* were being taken in to allow a freer passage for any air that might begin to stir with the nightfall.

The barefooted sailors trod gingerly about, carefully avoiding the metal-work on the hatch combings and the soft blotches of pitch that had bubbled up through the deck seams. The only sounds were the chattering of a large monkey that was swinging himself to and fro in the heat-slackened shrouds, and the discordant squawking of some tame parrots on the forecastle.

A group of officers lolled against the after-rail, and three or four youngsters, a little apart from them, had just finished a whispered conversation. But for some minutes there had not been a loud word spoken throughout the ship. There was one thought present in the minds and hearts of all, from the Captain, ill and half delirious with fever below in his close sweltering cabin, to Midshipman Bobby Seymour, who had had a lump in his throat for the past twenty-four hours—one thought, over and over—home, home, home.

It was the early evening of the night before Christmas. A sagging wind-sail, that hung down the forward hatchway like a huge empty trouser leg, swayed a little, and the movement caught the junior Lieutenant's eye.

"The land breeze! Feel it?" he said, lifting his hand as if to enforce silence.

Warm, and almost fetid with an indescribable odor, a breath had crept softly across the water from the low-lying African coast—a breath redolent of swamps, of strange unhealthy products of the overheated earth, suggestive of fever that burned into the bones.

"I don't like it," said Bobby Seymour, wriggling his small shoulders. He spoke in a half whisper. "I wish I was at Irvington with the river all iced up, the sleigh-bells jingling-jangling everywhere, and—"

"Oh, I say, quit, please, won't you?" interrupted the boy at his elbow. "It's hard enough to stand things as they are. What wouldn't we all give—" Then he shut his lips firmly without finishing his sentence. "Hear that surf!" he added, after a moment's silence.

Borne on the slight air from the eastward came a deep sound like the booming of a thousand giant drums.

"It doesn't look like any landing to-morrow," remarked Midshipman Seymour, wisely.

Just then the thin musical notes of a concertina drifted out from the forecastle.

"Be it never so humble, there's no place like home,"

chanted a voice.

"They have it there too," said Bobby Seymour to himself. "Why shouldn't they?"

But the song died away almost as soon as it had begun. In fact, it had been more like a deep-chested musical sigh than anything else.

"I wonder if we couldn't get the Kroomen to sing something jolly for us to-night?" suggested one of the larger midshipmen.

"I think the old man is too ill to stand much celebrating just now," spoke up another. "But I say, Remson, let's see if one of us can't get ashore to-morrow and get something fresh to eat. I'm sick of this old hooker, anyhow. Might as well be docked in Portsmouth, for all the good we're doing here."

This was fact. Watching for slave-traders under such restrictive orders from the government at Washington as precluded the faintest possibility of making a capture was far from exciting, and, besides, the goings on at home had produced a feeling of uneasiness on shipboard, for this was the troublous winter of '60-1.

It was little wonder that things were doleful on board the old *Sumter* this particular Christmas eve, and so it passed like the evening of any other day.

But Bobby Seymour, when he awakened the next morning, gazed up at the huge deck beams of the steerage, and suddenly remembered something.

He slid out of his hammock and scrambled over to the chest that had his initials on the lid. He opened it, and dug out a neatly tied package from a corner. It was addressed to him with his full title, and was inscribed "Not to be opened until Xmas day."

He crawled over to an open port, and sitting down on the deck, deftly undid the wrapping. But he paused for a minute before he looked to see what it contained, and his eyes took on the sightless expression of deep thoughts far away as he gazed out over the sea.

The sun was flaming above the tree-tops on the distant shore, and the warm morning breeze fluttered the hair of his tousled curly head.

But Bobby did not see the sun or feel the breeze. He saw a wide stretch of snow-covered lawn, with the pine branches that lined the driveway weighted down, and each elm and apple bough all a-sparkle in a case of ice, and the sleigh bells "jingle-jangling" everywhere. He knew how his skates looked, hanging up on the nail behind the door, and his hockey-stick, and his sled. He could smell the hot buckwheat cakes and hear his little sisters laughing.

"They'd just be taking down their stockings," he said, a quiver coming to his eyelid.

In truth, Midshipman Bobby Seymour was nothing but a boy, and not a very tall one. He looked even younger than he really was as he sat there on the deck hugging his bare knees up to his chin, the still unopened package held tightly under his arm, and if a tear did roll down his cheek, and all the way down his neck beneath his collar, it was nothing to be ashamed of.

"Mr. Seymour," broke in a voice that brought back the heat and the smell of the ship quite suddenly. "Mr. Jephson wishes to see you on deck as soon as possible, sir."

Bobby made a dash at his eyes with the back of his hand, and looked up at the big red-mustached orderly. "Very good; be up there right away," he answered.

Then he arose and hurried into his things, only glancing into the package, and catching sight of two or three letters and some mysterious objects done up in tissue-paper.

As he came on deck he walked quietly aft and touched his cap. Mr. Jephson, the executive officer, saw him.

"Ah, Mr. Seymour, merry Christmas!" he remarked, much as if it was the usual thing to say. "I have some work for your boat's crew, sir. Just step here a minute."

Bobby hastened to the quarter-deck.

"There, do you see that," said the Lieutenant, pointing towards the dark green line of coast—"that white thing floating there, a mile or more from shore?"

"Yes, sir," said Bobby, squinting his little sleepy eyes.

Mr. Jephson picked up his sea-glasses. "In my mind it will help clear up the meaning of that glare to the westward two nights ago," he said. "I think it's a bit of wreckage, or an overturned boat that is drifting in." The Lieutenant spoke slowly as he adjusted the binoculars. Then he turned, and added, quickly:

"Get your coffee; see that the men get theirs; lower away the cutter; pick that up or find out what it is, and come back to the ship. You will be here by breakfast-time."

"Aye, aye, sir," Bobby answered.

All hands were turning out as he entered the steerage, but he heard few "Merry Christmases," and the coffee tasted bitterer than ever. All at once an idea seized him, and he thrust the precious package into his jacket. He could read the letters anyhow as he rowed back to the ship. In another moment he was stepping through the gangway.

"Don't go too close to the white water, youngster," said one of the junior officers, who had come on deck, "or you'll be a Robinson Crusoe before you know it."

"Thank you, sir," replied Bobby, as he hastened down the companion ladder. He had to make a leap of it into the cutter, where the men were waiting for him, in no pleasant frame of mind at the prospect of a long pull so early. In another minute they were heading shorewards. On board the ship, so used had every one become to the slow rolling, that it was hard to believe that such a sea was running. But from the boat the ground-swells seemed great hills, so smooth that an oar left a

swirl in the green water as a paddle might in a mill-pond.

They had rowed some distance, now climbing up slowly, then coasting down with a rush, before Bobby caught sight of the floating object gleaming on the top of a great lift of sea a mile nearer the shore; he pointed it out to the coxswain, and sat down to read his letters.

As he drew the package from his breast he became conscious that it would not be quite comfortable to open it with twelve pairs of curious eyes gazing at him, so he brought forth only two of the letters with an affectation of carelessness, tied up the rest of the little bundle, and thrust it back into his jacket again.

Sitting there in the stern-sheets of the cutter, with the scorching African sun overhead, and the "thrim-thrum" of oars in his ears, once more his thoughts jumped back to the snow and the sleigh-bells as he opened the first little note. It was written in lead-pencil on very fancy paper, all posies and forget-me-nots. Nor was it written exactly. Most of the words were printed in capital letters, the I's carefully dotted, and the T's laboriously crossed. The lump came into Bobby's throat as he read it slowly.

"DEAR BROTHER ROBERT" [it began],—"I made this for you all myself. Merry Christmas. I have a kitten and its name is—"

The boat had given such a sickening downward swoop that Bobby looked up suddenly. Never had he seen such a wave in all his short experience. And the sensation! It reminded him of the time he was tossed in a blanket at Annapolis. Yet the water's surface was smooth and oily—not the sound of a ripple—dead silence.

The men slackened in their stroke as another came on astern and raised them upwards. When at its summit Bobby looked towards the shore.

Nothing but a succession of green ridges. But suddenly a line of white like a rip in a great cloth stretched along against the mass of foliage above the beach. Then down the cutter raced.

Midshipman Seymour felt that the eyes of his crew were all upon him; he had detected a frightened glance or two, and the bowmen were looking over their shoulders.

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"Steady, there!" he said, crumpling the letters into his pocket as he stood up. Then his spirits rose. Only a few hundred feet further on floated the mysterious object, rising in plain sight; it was a heavy chest, with lettering of some sort on it.

"Oars!" he shouted, and the men rested, glancing uneasily at their companions on the thwarts. Bobby looked back at the ship.

It scorned incredible that they could have covered that distance in such a space of time.

"In bow there, with your boat-hooks!" he shouted. But before the men could get to their feet an expression of horror crossed every face. Three or four cried out in fear. Once more Bobby turned, and a sick feeling came all over him.

The coxswain leaned forward. "We're going to catch it, sir," he whispered, and he made as if to kick off his shoes.

Full half a mile seaward one of the tall waves had broken at its height, and widening and frothing, it spread out in a mass of glistening smother. The sight made the little midshipman think of an army of white horses rising at a great green hedge.

The water around the boat began to clop noisily against the gunwales, and the wave crests on either hand danced and tottered uneasily. Then, pitching down into a hollow, the white horses disappeared for an instant, and nothing could be seen but a green wall in front. But the charge was coming—nearing; they could hear the roaring of it now.

"Steady, men!" said Bobby. "Coxswain, it's too late to turn her; we'll have to ride it in." Even to himself his voice sounded strange and deep. He forgot he was a boy. Was not he responsible? Were not they all looking to him to bring them safely through? He was an officer.

It was not customary for the regular crew of any ship to make a landing on this part of the African coast. For this service a tribe of hardy blacks, Kroomen they were called, provided expert boatmen to any ship on coast station. They knew how to ride the surf, and the best man-o'-war's man was but a novice to them. But for the last three days even the blacks had declared the surf too heavy for safe landing, and now Bobby and his cutter were going to try it, much against their wills.

As the broken roaring water rushed down upon them the noise drowned even his thoughts, and as it caught the boat full astern each man held his breath. But the oars pulling furiously kept the cutter's nose in the right direction, and catching the impetus, she tore shoreward like a runaway engine. After the first shock it was exciting. Bobby even forgot the danger. He noticed the unlucky chest turning over and over in the foam, and peering ahead he became aware for the first time that they were nearing the outlet of a small river that debouched into the sea.

The surf was running high up on the beach, and frothing across a bar at the river's mouth, where a little island made a delta on each side. No sooner had he noticed this when he saw something else—a score of naked black figures running up the sand. Now the Majuba tribes are cannibals. Bobby's heart stood still. To provide a Christmas dinner to a lot of hungry savages was not a pleasant prospect.

"Pull, port! hold, starboard!" shouted the young commander. The men bent to their oars, and,

wonder of wonders, with a great heave and a twist the cutter crossed the bar, and shot up on a wave between the green shelving banks of an unknown river, where a white man's boat had never been before. Keeping well to the centre of the stream, the cutter at last reached smooth water, and Bobby found himself standing up, his knees trembling slightly, and not one hundred yards away a horde of the vilest-looking wild black men he had ever set his eyes on. Something had to be done, and to take advantage of their surprise was his first thought. "Why not sing?" he murmured out loud. They were waiting for some demonstration, evidently.

But as the rest of this narrative would make a long story in itself, it is best to let Midshipman Seymour tell it shortly, as he did in the letter to his sister Dorothy, which he wrote three days later.

"DEAR LITTLE SIS [it ran]—You will have to write again and tell me the name of the kitten, for I have lost your beautiful letter before I could finish reading it. And the fine bead-work pin-cushion, full of the very sharpest pins, I had to give away, and Jack's six-bladed knife, and Nell's fancy-work purse, and mother's silk handkerchief, and grandma's silk gloves, and the package of rock-candy; in fact, everything you sent me now belongs to a great ugly cannibal king whose name is Matagoolah. But all this means a story, so I will tell it as quickly as I can. On Christmas day I was sent out from the ship with my boat's crew to pick up something that was floating in the water. It proved to be a chest from the slaver *Nightingale* that had burned up 'way out to sea. As we rowed along we were caught in the surf, and by good luck were carried up a little river that no one knew existed. I tell you your red-headed brother was very badly frightened when he saw a lot of savages standing on the bank. I thought, 'Oh, if grandma could only see me now!' The savages were so astonished that they did not do anything, and I thought I'd make believe I came to see them on purpose.

"So I signaled out an old fellow who appeared to be a chief, and making my very best bow, I began to sing, very solemnly and loudly, 'Haul the bow-line; well I love my darling,' and the men all joined in the chorus. Then I thought of the only presents I had—which were yours—and rowing up close, I had four of the crew carry me ashore, where I presented everything I had to the chief, singing the only thing that came into my head—'Hail Columbia!'—at the top of my voice. It was quite funny. When he saw the pin-cushion he was so delighted; and as he received one thing after another he began to grin and chatter. But the rock-candy! My! when he tasted it I was afraid he was going to eat me up for joy! He gave some orders, and all of his men threw down their spears and fell flat on their faces. So I ordered my crew to come ashore, which they did, pretty well frightened.

"Now what to do I did not know; but looking towards the ship, which was some three miles out to sea, I saw a puff of smoke, and I knew they were firing one of the big guns as a signal to call back the other boats, so I lifted up my hands and waved them; then as the report came I bent down low, and all of my men did the same. This time the chief himself fell on his knees! But what will you suppose I saw also? The big chest that I had started out to get! It was rolling up in the surf near the beach. At once I began to make motions as if I were hauling something in with a rope, and told four of my crew to go fetch the chest from the sea. When they plunged in and brought it out the savages looked scared to death. And breaking it open, what do you suppose it contained? Why, beads and knives and trinkets, a big brass crown—in fact, a complete trader's outfit, enough to have bought fifty slaves and more. That settled it. The king would have given me the heads of half his people.

"Well, to make it short, we were feasted and treated, and I am afraid prayed to for two days. I kept a flag flying from a tree-top; the trees are not tall, but I knew they could see it from the ship, and yesterday they managed to land three boats with more presents for my black friends, and took us off. But I really believe that it was your 'Merry Xmas' pin-cushion that saved our lives. Make me another, tell me the name of the kitten, and whether you are having good coasting; and take lots of love and kisses for all.

"From your loving brother,
"ROB."

And this is the story of a rather unusual Christmas day, and explains the reason why Bobby Seymour was given the title of "Envoy Extraordinary to his Majesty King Matagoolah, Ruler of the Majubas."

THE FREYS' CHRISTMAS PARTY.

BY RUTH McENERY STUART.

There was a great sensation in the old Coppenole house three days before Christmas.

The Freys, who lived on the third floor, were going to give a Christmas dinner party, and all the other tenants were invited.

Such a thing had never happened before, and, as Miss Penny told her canary-birds while she filled their seed-cup, it was "like a clap of thunder out of a clear sky."

The Frey family, consisting of a widow and her brood of half a dozen children, were as poor as any of the tenants in the old building, for wasn't the mother earning a scant living as a beginner in newspaper work? Didn't the Frey children do every bit of the house-work, not to mention little outside industries by which the older ones earned small incomes? Didn't Meg send soft gingerbread to the Christian Woman's Exchange twice a week, and Ethel find time, with all her studies, to paint butterflies on Swiss aprons for fairs or fêtes?

Didn't everybody know that Conrad, now but thirteen, was a regular solicitor for orders for Christmas trees, palmetto palms, and gray moss from the woods for decorative uses on holiday occasions?

The idea of people in such circumstances as these giving dinner parties! It was almost incredible, but it was true, for tiny notes of invitation tied with rose-colored ribbons had been flying over the building all the afternoon. The Frey twins, Felix and Félicie, both barefoot, had carried one to each door.

They were written with gold ink on pink paper, and a water-colored butterfly poised in mid-air somewhere on each one, while at the left lower end were the mysterious letters "R.S.V.P."

The old Professor who lived in the room next the Frey kitchen got one, and Miss Penny, who occupied the room beyond. So did Mademoiselle Guyosa, who made paper flowers, and the mysterious little woman of the last, worst room in the house—a tiny figure whose face none of her neighbors had even seen, but who had given her name to the baker and milkman as "Mamzelle St. John."

And there were others. Madame Coraline, the fortune-teller, who rented the hall room on the second floor, was perhaps more surprised at her invitation than any of the rest. No one ever asked her anywhere. Even the veiled ladies who sometimes visited her darkened chamber always tiptoed up the steps as if they were half ashamed of going there.

The twins had a time getting her to come to the door to receive the invitation, and after vainly rapping several times, had finally brought a parasol and hammered upon the horseshoe tacked upon the door, until at last it opened just about an inch. And then she was invited.

But indeed it is time to be telling how the party originated.

It had been the habit of the Frey children, since they could remember, to save up spare coins all the year for a special fund which they called "Christmas Money."

The old fashion of spending these small amounts in presents for one another had long ago given place to the better one—more in the Christmas spirit—of using it to brighten the day for some one less blessed than themselves.

It is true that on the Christmas before the one of this story they had broken the rule, or only strained it, perhaps, to buy a little stove for their mother's room.

But a rule that would not stretch enough to take in such a home need would be a poor one indeed.

This year they had had numerous schemes, but somehow none had seemed to appeal to the stockholders in the Christmas firm, and so they had finally called a meeting on the subject.

It was at this meeting that Meg, fourteen years old, having taken the floor, said: "Well, it seems to *me* that the *worst* kind of a Christmas must be a lonely one. Just think how nearly all the roomers in this house spent last Christmas—most of 'em sittin' by their lone selves in their rooms, and some of 'em just eatin' every-day things! The Professor hadn't a thing but Bologna-sausage and crackers. *I know—'cause I peeped.* An' now, whatever you all are goin' to do with *your* money, *mine's* goin' right into this house, to the roomers—*some way.*"

"If we knew what we could do, Meg?" said Ethel.

"If we knew what we could do or *how we could do it,*" interrupted Conrad, "why, I'd give my eighty-five cents in a minute. I'd give it to the old Professor to have his curls cut."

Conrad was a true-hearted fellow, but he was full of mischief.

"Shame on you, Buddy!" said Meg, who was thoroughly serious. "Can't you be in earnest for just a minute?"

"I am in earnest, Meg. I think your scheme is bully—if it could be worked; but the Professor wouldn't take our money any more'n we'd take his."

"Neither would any of them." This was Ethel's first real objection.

"Who's goin' to offer 'em money?" rejoined Meg.

"I tell you what we *might* do, maybe," Conrad suggested, dubiously. "We *might* buy a lot of fine grub, an' send it in to 'em sort o' mysteriously. How'd that do?"

"Twouldn't do at all," Meg replied. "The idea! Who'd enjoy the finest Christmas dinner in the world by his lone self, with nothin' but a lookin'-glass to look into and holler 'Merry Christmas' to?"

Conrad laughed. "Well, the Professor's little cracked glass wouldn't be much of a comfort to a hungry fellow. It gives you two mouths!"

Conrad was nothing if not facetious.

"There you are again, Buddy! *Do* be serious," said Meg. And then she added, desperately, "The thing *I* want to do is to *invite* 'em!"

"Invite! Who? What? When? How? Where?"

Such was the chorus that greeted Meg's astounding proposition.

"Why, I say," she explained, nothing daunted, "let's put all our Christmas money together and get the very best dinner we can, and invite all the roomers to come and eat it with us. *Now I've said it!* And I ain't foolin', either."

"And we haven't a whole table-cloth to our names, Meg Frey, and you know it!" It was Ethel who spoke again.

"And what's that got to do with it, Sisty? We ain't goin' to eat the cloth. Besides, can't we set the dish-mats over the holes? 'Twouldn't be the first time."

"But Meg, dearie, you surely are not proposing to invite company to dine in the kitchen, are you? And who'd cook the dinner, not to mention buying it?" [Pg 153]

"Well, now, listen, Sisty dear. The dinner that's in my mind isn't a society-column dinner like those Momy writes about, and those we are goin' to invite don't wear out much table-linen at home. And they cook their own dinners, too, most of 'em—exceptin' when they eat 'em in the French market, with a Chinaman on one side of 'em and an Indian on the other.

"*I'm* goin' to cook *ours*, and as for eatin' in the kitchen, why, we won't need to. Just see how warm it is! The frost hasn't even nipped the banana leaves over there. And Buddy can pull the table out on the big back gallery, an' we'll hang papa's old gray soldier blanket for a portière to keep the Quinettes from lookin' in; and, Sisty, you can write the invitations an' paint butterflies on 'em."

Ethel's eyes for the first time sparkled with interest, but she kept silent, and Meg continued:

"An' Buddy'll bring in a lot of gray moss and *latanier* to dec'rate with, an'—"

"An' us'll wait on the table!"

"Yes, us'll wait on the table!" cried the twins.

"But," added Felix, in a moment, "you mustn't invite Miss Penny, Meg, 'cause if you do F'lissy an' me'll be thest shore to disgrace the party a-laughin'. She looks thest ezzac'ly like a canary-bird, an' Buddy has tooken her off till we thest die a-laughin' every time we see her. I think she's raised canaries till she's a sort o' half-canary herself. Don't let's invite her, Sisty."

"And don't you think Miss Penny would enjoy a slice of Christmas turkey as well as the rest of us, Felix?"

"No; I fink she ought to eat canary-seed and fish-bone," chirped in Dorothea.

Dorothea was only five, and this from her was so funny that even Meg laughed.

"An' Buddy says he knows she sleeps perched on the towel-rack, 'cause they ain't a sign of a bed in her room."

The three youngest were fairly choking with laughter now. But the older ones had soon grown quite serious in consulting about all the details of the matter, and even making out a conditional list of guests.

When they came to the fortune-teller, both Ethel and Conrad hesitated, but Meg, true to her first impulse, had soon put down opposition by a single argument.

"It seems to me she's the special one *to* invite to a Christmas party like ours," she pleaded. "The lonesomer an' horrider they are, the more they belong, an' the more they'll enjoy it, too."

"Accordin' to that," said Conrad, "the whole crowd ought to have a dizzy good time, for they're about as fine a job lot of lonesomes as I ever struck. And as for beauty! 'Vell, my y'ung vriends, how you was to-morrow?" he continued, thrusting his thumbs into his armholes and strutting in imitation of the old Professor.

Meg was almost out of patience. "Do hush, Buddy!" she protested, "an' let's talk business. First of all, we have to put it to vote to see whether we *want* to have the party or not."

"I ain't a-goin' to give my money to no such a ugly ol' party," cried Felix. "I want pretty little girls with curls an' wreafts on to my party."

"An' me, too. I want a organ-grinder to the party that gets my half o' our seventy cents," echoed Félicie.

Meg was indeed having a hard time of it.

"You see, Conrad"—the use of that name meant reproof from Meg—"you see, Conrad, this all comes from your makin' fun of everybody. But of course we can get an organ-grinder if the little



**"SHE OUGHT TO EAT
CANARY-SEED AND
FISH-BONE."**

ones want him."

Ethel still seemed somewhat doubtful about the whole affair. Ethel was in the high-school. She had a lofty bridge to her nose. She was fifteen, and she never left off her final g's as the others did. These are, no doubt, some of the reasons why she was regarded as a sort of superior person in the family. If it had not been for the prospect of painting the cards, and a certain feeling of benevolence in the matter, it would have been hard for her to agree to the party at all. As it was, her voice had a note of mild protest as she said:

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"It's going to cost a good deal, Meg. How much money have we? Let's count up. I have a dollar and eighty-five cents."

"And I've got two dollars," said Meg.

"How is it you always save the most? I haven't saved but ninety cents." Conrad spoke with a little real embarrassment as he laid his little pile of coins upon the table.

"I reckon it's 'cause I've got a regular plan, Buddy. I save a dime out of every dollar I get all through the year. It's the best way. And how much have you ponies got?"

"We've got seventy cents together, an' we been a-whiskerin' in our ears about it, too. We don't want our money put-ed in the dinner with the rest. We want to see what we are givin'."

"Well, suppose you buy the fruit. Seventy cents'll get bananas and oranges enough for the whole party."

"An' us wants to buy 'em ourselves, too—hey, F'lix?"

"Yes, us wants to buy 'em ourselves, too."

"And so you shall. And now all in favor of the party hold up right hands."

All hands went up.

"Contr'ry, no!" Meg continued.

"Contr'ry, no!" echoed the twins.

"Hush! You mustn't say that. That's just what they say at votin's."

"Gee-man-tally! But you girls're awfully mixed," Conrad howled with laughter. "They don't have any 'contr'ry no's' when they vote by holdin' up right hands. Besides, Dorothea held up her left hand, for I saw her."

"Which is quite correct, Mr. Smartie, since we all know that Dolly is left-handed. You meant to vote for the party, didn't you, dearie?" Meg added, turning to Dorothea.

For answer the little maid only bobbed her head, thrusting both hands behind her, as if afraid to trust them again.

"But I haven't got but thest a nickel," she ventured, presently. "F'lix says it'll buy salt."

"Salt!" said Conrad. "Well, I should smile! It would buy salt enough to pickle the whole party. Why, that little St. Johns woman goes out with a nickel an' lays in provisions. I've seen her do it."

"Shame on you, Buddy!"

"I'm not jokin', Meg. At least I saw her buy a *quartie's* worth o' coffee and *quartie's* worth o' sugar, an' then ask for lagniappe o' salt. Ain't that layin' in provisions? She uses a cigar-box for her pantry, too."

"Well," she protested seriously, "what of it, Conrad? It doesn't take much for one very little person. Now, then, the party is voted for; but there's one more thing to be done before it can be really decided. We must ask Momsy's permission, of course. And that is goin' to be hard, because I don't want her to know about it. She has to be out reportin' festivals for the paper clear up to Christmas mornin', and if she knows about it, she'll worry over it. So I propose to ask her to let us give her a Christmas surprise, and not tell her what it is."

"And we know just what she'll say," Conrad interrupted; "she'll say, 'If you older children all agree upon anything, I'm sure it can't be very far wrong or foolish'—just as she did time we put up the stove in her room."

"Yes, I can hear her now," said Ethel. "But still we must *let* her say it before we do a single thing, because, you know, *she mightn't*. An' then where'd the party be?"

"It would be scattered around where it was last Christmas—where all the parties are that don't be," said Conrad. "They must be the ones we are always put down for, an' that's how we get left; eh, Sisty?"

"Never mind, Buddy; we won't get left as you call it, this time, anyway—unless, of course, Momsy vetoes it."

"Vetoes what, children?"

They had been so noisy that they had not heard their mother's step on the creaking stairs.

Mrs. Frey carried her pencil and notes, and she looked tired, but she smiled indulgently as she repeated, "What am I to veto, dearies—or to approve?"

"It's a sequet! A Trismas sequel!"

"Yes, an' it's got owanges in it—"

"—An' bananas!"

"Hush, you ponies! And, Dolly, not another word!" Meg had resolutely taken the floor again.

"Momsy, we've been consulting about our Christmas money, and we've voted to ask you to let us do something with it, and not tell you a thing about it, only"—and here she glanced for approval at Ethel and Conrad—"only we *ought* to tell you, Momsy dear, that the surprise isn't for you this time."

And then Mrs. Frey, sweet mother that she was, made just the little speech they thought she would make, and when they had kissed her, and all, even to Ethel, who seemed now as enthusiastic as the others, caught hands and danced around the dinner table, she was glad she had consented.

It was such a delight to be able to supplement their scant Christmas prospects with an indulgence giving such pleasure.

"And I'm glad it isn't for me, children," she added, as soon as the hubbub gave her a hearing, "I'm very glad. You know you strained a point last year, and I'm sure you did right. My little stove has been a great comfort. But I am always certain of just as many home-made presents as I have children, and they are the ones I value. Dolly's lamp-lighters are not all used up yet, and if she *was* to give me another bundle this Christmas I shouldn't feel sorry. But our little Christmas *money* we want to send out on some loving mission. And, by-the-way, I have two dollars which may go with yours if you need it—if it will make some poor body's bed softer or his dinner better."

"Momsy's guessed!" Felix clapped his hands with delight.

"Sh! Hush, Felix! Yes, Momsy, it'll do one of those things exactly," said Meg. "And now *I* say we'd better break up this meeting before the ponies tell the whole business."

"F'lix never telled a thing," chirped Félicie, always ready to defend her mate. "Did you, F'lixy? Momsy said 'dinner' herself."

"So I did, dear; but who is to get the dinner and why you are going to send it are things mother doesn't wish to know. And here are my two dollars. Now off to bed, the whole trundle-bed crowd, for I have a lot of copy to write to-night. Ethel may bring me a bite, and then sit beside me and write while I sip my tea and dictate and Meg puts the chickens to roost. And Conrad will keep quiet over his books. Just one kiss apiece and a hug for Dolly. Shoo now!"

So the party was decided.

The Frey home, although one of the poorest, was one of the happiest in New Orleans, for it was made up of cheery workers, even little Dorothea having her daily self-assumed tasks. Miss Dorothea, if you please, dusted the banisters round the porch every day, straightened the rows of shoes in mother's closet, folded the daily paper in the rack, and kept the one rug quite even with the front of the hearth. And this young lady had, furthermore, her regular income of five cents a week.

Of course her one nickel contributed to the party had been saved only a few hours, but Dorothea was only five, and the *praline* woman knew about her income, and came trudging all the way up the stairs each week on "pay-day."

Even after the invitations were sent, it seemed to Dolly that the "party-day" would never come, for there were to be "three sleeps" before it should arrive.

It was Ethel's idea to send the cards early, so as to forestall any home preparation among the guests.

But all things come to him who waits—even Christmas. And so at last the great day arrived.

Nearly all the invited had accepted, and everything was very exciting; nor was the situation without its difficulties.

Even though she was out every day, it had been so hard to keep every tell-tale preparation out of Mrs. Frey's sight. But when she had found a pan of crullers on the top pantry shelf, or heard the muffled "gobble-gobble" of the turkey shut up in the old flour-barrel, or smelt invisible bananas and apples, she had been truly none the wiser, but had only said: "Bless their generous hearts! They are getting up a fine dinner to send to somebody."

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Indeed Mrs. Frey never got an inkling of the whole truth until she tripped up the stairs a half-hour before dinner on Christmas day, to find the feast all spread.

The old mahogany table, extended to its full length, stood gorgeous in decorations of palmetto, moss, and flowers, out upon the deep back porch, which was converted into a very pretty chamber by the hanging curtain of gray.

If she had any misgivings about it, she betrayed them by no single word or look, but there were bright red spots upon her usually pale cheeks as she passed, smiling, into her room to dash into the dinner dress Ethel had laid out for her.

To have her poverty-stricken home invaded by a host of strangers was striking a blow at the most sensitive weakness of this proud woman. And yet the loving motive which was so plain through it all, showing the very spirit in her dear children for which she had prayed, was too sacred a thing

to be chilled by even a half-shade of disapproval.

"And who are coming, dear?" she asked of Meg, as soon as she could trust her voice.

"All the roomers, Momsy, excepting the little hunchback lady and Madame Coraline."

"Madame Coraline!" Mrs. Frey could not help exclaiming.

"Yes, Momsy. She accepted, and she *even came*, but she went back just now. She was dressed terribly fine—gold lace and green silk, but it was old and dowdy; and, Momsy, her cheeks were just as red! I was on the step-ladder tackin' up the Bethlehem picture, Sisty was standin' on the high chair hanging up the star, and Buddy's arms were full of gray moss that he was wrappin' round your chair. But we were just as polite to her as we could be, and asked her to take a seat. And we all thought she sat down; but she went, Momsy, and no one saw her go. Buddy says she's a witch. She left that flower-pot of sweet-basil on the table. I s'pose she brought it for a present. Do you think that we had better send for her to come back, Momsy?"

"No, daughter, I think not. No doubt she had her own reasons for going, and she may come back. And are the rest all coming?"

"Yes'm; but we had a time gettin' Miss Guyosa to come. She says she's a First Family, an' she never mixes. But I told her so were we, and we mixed. And then I said that if she'd come she could sit at one end o' the table and carve the ham, while you'd do the turkey. But she says Buddy ought to do the turkey. But she's comin'. And, Momsy, the turkey is a perfect beauty. We put pecans in him. Miss Guyosa gave us the receipt and the nuts, too. Her cousin sent 'em to her from his plantation. And did you notice the paper roses in the moss festoons, Momsy? She made those. She has helped us fix up *a lot*. She made all the Easter flowers on St. Joseph's altar at the Cathedral, too, and—"

A rap at the floor announcing a first guest sent the little cook bounding to the kitchen, while Ethel rushed into her mother's room, her mouth full of pins and her sash on her arm.

She had dressed the three little ones a half-hour ago; and Conrad, who had also made an early toilet, declared that they had all three walked round the dinner table thirty-nine times since their appearance in the "dining-room." When he advanced to do the honors, the small procession toddling single file behind him, somehow it had not occurred to him that he might encounter Miss Penny, the canary lady, standing in a dainty old dress of yellow silk just outside the door, nor, worse still, that she should bear in her hands a tiny cage containing a pair of young canaries.

He said afterward that "everything would have passed off all right if it hadn't been for the twins." Of course he had forgotten that he had himself been the first one to compare Miss Penny to a canary.

By the time the little black-eyed woman had flitted into the door, and in a chirpy, birdlike voice wished them a merry Christmas, Felix had stuffed his entire handkerchief into his mouth. Was it any wonder that Félicie and Dorothea, seeing this, did actually disgrace the whole party by convulsions of laughter?

They were soon restored to order, though, by the little yellow-gowned lady herself, for it took her but half a minute to say that the birds were a present for the twins—"the two little ones who brought me the invitation."

Such a present as this is no laughing matter, and, besides, the little Frey children were at heart polite. And so they had soon forgotten their mirth in their new joy.

And then other guests were presently coming in, and Mrs. Frey, looking startlingly fine and pretty in her fresh ruches and new tie, was saying pleasant things to everybody, while Ethel and Meg, tripping lightly in and out, brought in the dishes.

As there was no parlor, guests were received in a corner of the "dining-room." No one was disposed to be formal, and when the old Professor entered with a little brown paper parcel, which he declared, after his greetings, to contain his dinner, everybody felt that the etiquette of the occasion was not to be very strict or in the least embarrassing.

Of course Mrs. Frey, as hostess, "hoped the Professor would reconsider, and have a slice of the Christmas turkey"; but when they had presently all taken their seats at the table, and the eccentric guest had actually opened his roll of bread and cheese upon his empty plate, over which he began to pass savory dishes to his neighbors, she politely let him have his way. Indeed, there was nothing else to do, as he declared, declining the first course with a wave of his hand, that he had come "yust for the sake of sociability."

"I haf seen efery day doze children work und sing so nize togedder yust like leetle mans und ladies, so I come yust to eggssbress my t'anks for de compliment, und to make de acquaintance off doze nize y'ung neighbors." This with a courtly bow to each one of the children separately. And he added in a moment: "De dinner iss very fine, but for me one dinner iss like anudder. Doze are all externals."

To which measured and kindly speech Conrad could not help replying, "It won't be an external to us, Professor, by the time we get through."

"Oho!" exclaimed the old man, delighted with the boy's ready wit. "Dot's a very schmart boy you got dhere, Mrs. Vrey."

At which exhibition of broken English the twins, who were waiting on the table, thought it safe to rush to the kitchen on pretence of changing plates, while Dorothea, seated at the Professor's left,

found it necessary to bite both lips, and to stare hard at the vinegar-cruet for fully a second, to keep from laughing. Then, to make sure of her self-possession, she artfully changed the subject, remarking, dryly,

"My nickel buyed the ice."

This was much funnier than the Professor's speech, judging from the laughter that followed it. And Miss Dorothea Frey's manners were saved, which was the important thing.

It would be impossible in this short space to give a full account of this novel and interesting dinner party, but if any one supposes that there was a dull moment in it, he is altogether mistaken.

Mrs. Frey and Ethel saw to it that no one was neglected in conversation; Meg and Conrad looked after the prompt replenishing of plates, though the alert little waiters, Felix and Félicie, anticipated every want, and were as sprightly as two crickets, while Dorothea provoked frequent laughter by a random fire of unexpected remarks, never failing, for instance, to offer ice-water during every "still minute"; and, indeed, once that young lady did a thing that might have proved quite terrible had the old lady Saxony, who sat opposite, been disagreeable or sensitive.

What Dorothea said was innocent enough—only a single word of two letters, to begin with.

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She had been looking blankly at her opposite neighbor for a full minute, when she suddenly exclaimed,

"Oh!"

That was all, but it made everybody look, first at Dolly and then across the table. Whereupon the little maid, seeing her blunder, hastened to add:

"That's nothin'. My grandma's come out too."



THE ITALIAN ORGAN-GRINDER ARRIVES.

And then, of course, everyone noticed that old lady Saxony held her dainty hemstitched handkerchief quite over her mouth. Fortunately Mrs. Saxony's good sense was as great as her appreciation of humor, and her twinkling eyes, as she shook her finger threateningly at Dorothea, gave everybody leave to laugh. So "Dolly's terrible break," as Conrad called it, really went far to making the dinner a success—that is, if story-telling and laughter and the merry clamor such as distinguish the gayest of dinner parties the world over count as success.

It was while the Professor was telling a funny story of his boy life in Germany that there came a rap at the door, and the children, thinking only of Madame Coraline, turned their eyes toward the door, only to see the Italian organ-grinder, whom, in the excitement of the dinner party, they had forgotten to expect. He was to play for the children to dance after dinner, and had come a little early—or perhaps dinner was late.

Seeing the situation, the old man began bowing himself out, when the Professor, winking mysteriously at Mrs. Frey, and gesticulating animatedly, pointed first to the old Italian and then to Madame Coraline's vacant chair. Everybody understood, and smiling faces had already shown approval when Mrs. Frey said, quietly, "Let's put it to vote. All in favor raise glasses."

Every glass went up. The old Italian understood little English, but the offer of a seat is a simple pantomime, and he was presently declining again and again, bowing lower each time, until before he knew it—all the time refusing—he was in the chair, his plate was filled, and Dolly was asking him to have ice-water. No guest of the day was more welcome. None enjoyed his dinner more, judging from the indications. And as to Meg, the moving spirit in the whole party, she was beside herself with delight over the unexpected guest.



THE PROFESSOR NOT ONLY SANG BUT DANCED.

The dinner all through was what Conrad called a "rattlin' success," and the evening afterward, during which nearly every guest contributed some entertainment, was one long to be remembered. The Professor not only sang, but danced. Miss Penny whistled so like a canary that one could really believe her when she said she always trained her young birds' voices. Miss Guyosa told charming folk-lore anecdotes, handed down in her family since the old Spanish days in Louisiana.

The smiling organ-grinder played his engaged twenty-five cents' worth of tunes over and over again, and when the evening was done persistently refused to take the money until Felix slipped it into his pocket.

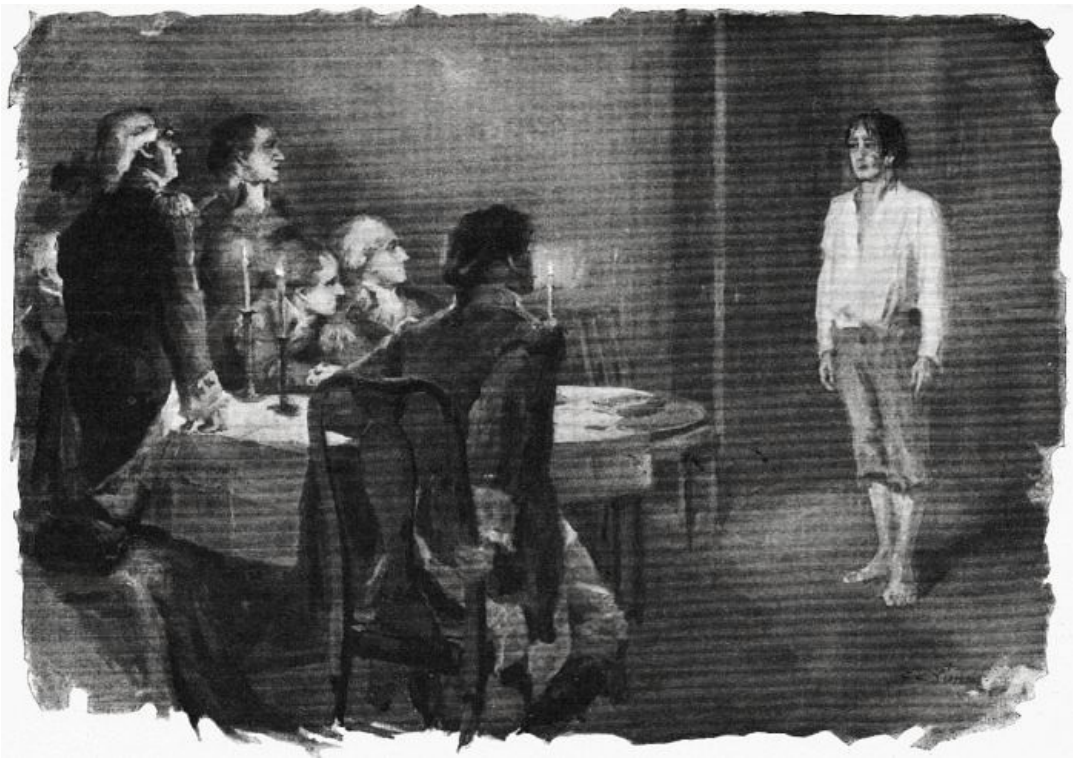
The Frey party will long be remembered in the Coppenole house, and beyond it, too, for some very pleasant friendships date from this Christmas dinner. The old Professor was just the man to help Conrad with his German lessons. It was so easy for Meg to send him a cup of hot coffee on cold mornings. Mrs. Frey and Miss Guyosa soon found many ties in common friends of their youth. Indeed, the twins had gotten their French names from a remote Creole cousin, who proved to be also a kinswoman to Miss Guyosa. It was such a comfort, when Mrs. Frey was kept out late at the office, for the children to have Miss Guyosa come and sit with them, telling stories or reading aloud, and they brought much brightness into her life too.

Madame Coraline soon moved away, and, indeed, before another Christmas the Freys had moved too—to a small cottage all their own, sitting in the midst of a pretty rose garden. Here often come Miss Guyosa and the Professor, both welcome guests, and Conrad says the Professor makes love to Miss Guyosa, but it is hard to tell.

One cannot keep up with two people who can tell jokes in four languages, but the Professor has a way of dropping in as if by accident on the evenings Miss Guyosa is visiting the Freys, and they do read the same books—in four languages. There's really no telling.

When the Frey children are playing on the *banquette* at their front gate on sunny afternoons, the old organ-grinder often stops, plays a free tune or two for them to dance by, smilingly doffs his hat to the open window above, and passes on.





FOR KING OR COUNTRY.^[1]

A Story of the Revolution.

BY JAMES BARNES.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MESSENGER FROM STATEN ISLAND.

For a long time George lay awake underneath the pier, worrying more and more about Carter. At last he decided that it was better to take the brightest view of things, and that there was no use borrowing trouble, taking all into consideration.

"He may have hailed and I not heard him," he reasoned, sensibly, putting it out of his mind; and looking out, he saw that the fog had cleared away, the anchor lights of the fleet shone brightly, and their reflections flashed in the waters of the bay.

While watching he fell asleep again. But he was soon awakened by footsteps that literally sounded in his ears. The planks of the pier were only a few inches above his head, and some sand fell through the cracks upon him. It had been daylight for two hours or more, and it was stifling hot in his cramped hiding-place.

The sounds that had aroused him had been made by a party of sailors coming ashore from some of the boats that were tied to the landing. On the beach below a number of small craft were drawn up, and some Jack Tars and a few soldiers were digging in the sand for clams.

"Jupiter, but I'm hungry," murmured the young Yankee soldier, "and as dry in my throat as a sooty chimney!"

Something that was said above his head rang so well with his thoughts just then that he made a sudden movement, and almost broke his nose against a beam.

"What have ye in th' bottle, Jock, my lad? Douse my pipes! but have ye got into the Admiral's cellar?"

"Nothin' but cold spring water, messmate," was answered, cheerily. "But I fain 'twere what had once been inside this bit of glass. I'm sick of the mealy wet they give us on the *Roebuck*."

"Water's water the world over, when it comes to drinkin'," was the answer. "I wouldn't spoil the thirst I have on me for my morning's grog for the best spring water in this curst land we've come to."

"Hist! here," said the water-drinker; "I've got something else, me hearty, that will make your tongue curl. It's a meat pie and a big hunk of cheese. I prigged it out of the kitchen window up at the big house yonder."

"Let's off where we can get a taste and smell, messmate. It will be hard to take with us."

"Stay! here comes the Captain! Hide your prog; we'll come back for it. Don't be caught red-handed, man!"

George saw the bottle and a bundle wrapped in an old bit of straw matting thrust under the

boards of the pier.

The two men hastened to the float and joined five or six of their companions, who were waiting there.

Presently a man with a cocked hat came down, walking quickly. He gave a few curt orders, and the sailors manned one of the boats and pulled for the first of the outlying vessels.

"Necessity knows no law," said George, reaching out with the boat-hook.

He skilfully rolled the bottle towards him. It had once contained Madeira. Then he hooked on to the bundle, and soon landed the meat pie and the cheese. This done, he poked the matting outside in full view.

"Three good meals here," he said, munching away flat on his back. "Now, how to get out of this."

There were only two plans left—to wait until dark and try to obtain possession of one of the boats, or go inland and attempt to find a friend in one of the island farmers. He decided on the former.

It would take too much space to detail the conversations he overheard, or to tell of the chagrin of the sailor-men when they found out that some one had unearthed their spoils. They laid the blame on a landing-party from another vessel, however, and their language was that generally accredited to pirates; but it seemed to ease their minds in a measure. While they were declaring in several different languages that they would catch the thief George smiled in his hole in the sand, and commenced his mid-day meal.

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His range of vision was somewhat constricted on account of his narrow quarters, but he could see everything plainly that went on seaward.

The sailors and soldiers appeared to crack rough jokes and grumble rather than carry on coherent intercourse, and so far as news went, nothing could be gleaned.

About five o'clock in the afternoon George heard something at last that made him strain every nerve to listen. His heart thumped against his ribs.

"Pardon me, my Lord," a rich voice spoke, "but to-night would be the time. Look at yonder clouds. The Yankees would hardly expect us to land in the face of such threatening weather. 'Twould be a trick worthy of their own invention."

"There will be a storm, Cornwallis," answered a good-natured drawl. "I hate to start the ball rolling to the accompaniment of Jove's music, and I think rain dampens ardor. But it is as my brother says."

"What think you, my Lord Howe?" asked the one addressed as Cornwallis.

"If it storms, land twenty thousand troops. The rebels will not come to terms—deluded fools! Let's have no more temporizing." This was said in low firm tones that showed the speaker was accustomed to authority.

"Land it is," replied Cornwallis. "I doubt if they have a sentry posted. Phœbus Apollo! Look at the front of that black cloud. Hurry, sirs, or we will not make the ships before it be upon us."

Three gentlemen in silk stockings—for George could see their well-shaped legs before he caught a glimpse of anything else—walked down the pier. The sailors lounging about sprang up to attention; a soldier who had been playing leap-frog with a companion froze stiff with his hand to his sweltering forehead.

"Out oars! Give way!" and two big barges left the float, Cornwallis in one, and the two other distinguished figures in the second.

"Lord Howe and his brother, the General, that's who you are," whispered George. "And you are going to land twenty thousand troops on Long Island, eh? Oh, if Washington only knew! and I am going to let him into the secret, gentlemen, if the good Lord will prosper me."

He lay back again and proved for darkness, for his plans were now well formed.

A few yards up the beach lay a ship's dingy—the smallest boat swung at her side or stern quarters. Stoutly built and bluff in the bows, it was made for weather. Extending over the gunwale was a pair of new oars. The little boat had been hauled up on the sands to be calked and painted. The job had been finished early in the morning. All day had George cast covetous eyes at her.

Now as if in answer to his prayer, it had grown dark suddenly, as if the night had sprung forward some five hours. There was great to do out on the water.

Signals climbed up and down the halyards. Drums tapped, and on shore trumpets answered one another, it grew darker and darker, and, be joyful! the tide was coming in strong, rippling against the pier-head and creeping up the beach. All of the boats had been called back to the fleet; but the dingy was left, and George's hopes rose. All his chances lay in her.

The pier was deserted, and he loosened his limbs from their temporary grave, and worked his head and shoulders out and looked around. "There lies the city," he said. At this moment a great seam of fire ran across the cloud and hurled itself down at the earth. A burst of thunder followed. This was the bolt that had felled the elm so close to his friend Carter.

George crawled out and stumbled. He was so stiff that his knees hurt him when he moved. Now the wind came, and the rain began that wonderful downpour; the lightning flashed incessantly.

George hid alongside the dingy. He caught momentary glimpses of the nearest ships getting out stern anchors.

Now was the time for moving. The rain fairly stung him as he stood up and applied his shoulder to the dingy's bow. He dug his bare toes into the sand, and the muscles knotted in his arms and back. But the boat moved not so much as a finger's breadth. Again he took fresh hold, and strained until his ears pained and the cords of his neck were tense as bow-strings.

The small boat ploughed backwards, the tide caught the stern; then the rest of the launching was easy.

Many a sailor in that great fleet could not have done what this deep-chested boy of sixteen had accomplished by sheer strength.

As the dingy floated, George waded after her, and giving a final push, tumbled over the side. The current swept him up the shore. Even if seen by the big sloop-of-war that lay nearest to him, he reasoned that in the midst of all the bustle on board no one would think of putting after a drifting boat. He shipped the tiller, and kept well out of sight until the pitching and tossing told him he was getting into deeper water.

When he raised his head he was surprised to see what a distance he had travelled, and he thanked the lightning; it enabled him to keep his course. By stepping one of the oars in the mast-hole he increased his speed perceptibly.

It was manifest that Lord Howe meant what he said, for now and then he saw crowded boats running before the gale straight for the Gravesend beach. Rolling and plunging, the dingy made headway to the north.

Washington was holding a conference with his officers in the big room of the Kenedy House. Lately it had been rumored that Howe was going to up anchor and make sail for Philadelphia.

The storm raging without at times compelled a pause in the conversation. It was nearly midnight when a rapid knocking on the door followed the lull caused by a tremendous thunder-clap.

An officer thrust his head in from the hallway. "Pardon me, your Excellency," he said, "but there's a well-nigh drowned youth here, who claims he has come from Staten Island and bears news of importance."

"Show him in at once," said Washington, pushing back from the map-covered table.

Some of the officers half arose as a bedraggled figure entered. Barefooted, clad only in his shirt and trousers, with a big smooch of black paint covering half his face, the messenger drew himself up at attention.

"Well, sir," said the General, "what have you to tell, my lad?"

"I have just come from the British fleet," was the reply. "They are landing twenty thousand men on Long Island near Gravesend, your Excellency."

In a few words he told his story, and great was the excitement. In obedience to an invitation, the bearer of the tidings had sat down in a corner of a big sofa. The water dripped from his soaked clothing.

"Here, one of you gentlemen take this brave lad and find him something warm and dry to wear," spoke the Commander-in-chief, kindly.

One of the aides arose. "I have nothing but a spare uniform," he remarked, as the two went out into the hall and climbed the stairs to a little room on the third floor.

In a few minutes they returned, each dressed in the full uniform of a lieutenant.

Three cannon had fired in quick succession, and as they entered they roared again from the Battery.

Most of the officers had disappeared. Two were despatched to inform the Convention at White Plains. But near the door stood one who had evidently just come in out of the storm. It was John Clarkson, commanding the Tenth New Jersey Foot—George's own Captain.

Washington was standing; he took a step nearer as the two young men came into the room. "I have seen you somewhere before, my lad," he said, "have I not?"

"Yes, General," was the response. "You did me the honor of speaking to me."

"I remember," said the Commander-in-chief; "your name is Frothingham, and you have a sister and aunt. Am I not right?"

"Yes, General."

"You are now a sergeant," went on Washington.

"Yes, your Excellency."

"I have in my hand your commission as Lieutenant."

George almost fell, and so overcome was he that he could not reply.

Captain Clarkson hurried up and grasped his hand. "God bless you, my boy!" he said, much

affected.

"I pray you will accept the loan of the uniform," said the young aide. "There will be no time to get another."

At first George demurred, but his new friend insisted.

"You will honor it," he said, showing his fine teeth in a gracious smile. "No need of further thanks."

A tall dark man spoke up. "I have a vacancy in my regiment. May I have this young man to fill it?" he asked.

Washington smiled. "You are hereby assigned to Colonel Hand's regiment of rifles," he said. "Now, gentlemen, there is work before us on Long Island."

George, huddled under a canvas tent an hour later, in the clumsy boat that was ferrying him and some of his brother officers across the East River, glanced at the lace on his cuffs.

"I never thought of asking his name," he said, out loud. "What a dolt I am!"

One thing had begun to weigh on his mind increasingly. He had heard no news of Carter. He breathed a fervent prayer that he would see his friend again.

The next day was the 23d of August.

When the young Lieutenant crept out of the hay of a small barn early in the morning—for he had joined his new command the night before through all the storm—he walked to the brow of a little hill that overlooked the marshes and meadows in the direction of Gravesend. The branches of the trees along the hill were filled with men watching intently something that was going on below. George climbed a short distance up a small oak.

There they were—the British! It seemed to him thousands upon thousands. Their red coats gleamed, and occasionally a musket or a sword flashed in the distance; the different bodies of troops moved like red caterpillars across the meadow and along the beach. Numbers of boats were drawn up on the sand; many more were shuttling back and forth to the vessels in the bay; three large frigates were anchored quite close in shore.

He looked at the men about him. It hardly seemed possible that these lads, many scarcely older than himself, in gray yarn stockings and patched coats, would be able to stand for an instant against that brave array. Oh, if his brother William were only here beside him! and yet he heaved a sigh of relief, for who could tell what was going to happen?

A bugle sounded, and the men ran back to the clearing and formed in line. Their faces were pale, and there was little talking. A feeling of unreality was in George's mind; he could scarcely believe that there was going to be a battle. As yet he had not heard a death-dealing shot fired in all his life, and he did not know that it seemed to have a different sound from that of a gun discharged in practice or in sport.

Soon the regiment was on the move. They drove before them, as they made their way along the ridge of hills, all the cattle and live-stock that could be gathered in from the surrounding farms.

Looking back, they could see columns of smoke rising from the direction of New Utrecht and Gravesend. Some cannon-shots were also heard, and every heart beat quickly with excitement.

At last they reached the spot where the road crossed the Flatbush meadows and wound up the valley. It was known as Central Pass. Here coats were thrown aside, and with spades and improvised picks and shovels a long redoubt was thrown up along the ridge. For three days they toiled incessantly, felling trees and making escarpments of sharpened stakes.

It had rained almost incessantly, and it seemed to George that his new clothes would never get dry again. He had slept each night upon the soaked ground, and his hands and feet were sore and blistered.

It was nine o'clock in the morning. The redoubt had been finished, and the men, after an early parade, were cooking their breakfasts over little smoky fires in the thickets. Suddenly the booming of two guns was heard behind them.

For a day or so there had been random shots in front, but what did these two lone reports mean? The soldiers jumped to their arms. A bugle had rung clearly and sharply at the bottom of the hill. It was a strange call it played.

"Steady!" was the word that came down the line. "Keep your fire until they are close to us. Aim low. Keep cool."

Such were the instructions that were passed along by the officers. Colonel Hand had stationed himself behind George's company. He was standing so close that the latter could overhear what passed.

"I know not what those two guns mean," said Colonel Hand to a Major Chauncey, "but signals of some kind, I judge they must be, from Sullivan's forces over to the eastward."

But little did he know that it was those two signal-guns that had set on foot the action, and that the sound had caused a feeling of exultation to run through the English lines.

Now at the bottom of the hill could be seen moving troops; strange tall hats extended above the shrubbery, and a line of brilliantly uniformed soldiers burst out into the meadow. The green coats, the white and red facings, and the glitter of brass told who they were.

"The Hessians!" exclaimed Major Chauncey. "Steady, lads. We can lick the Dutchmen."

On they came. The clicking of the locks could be heard along the redoubt. The men, trembling, but cool under the influence of their commander, were settling themselves in easy positions for taking aim, when suddenly a spreading volley was heard in the rear.

What could it mean? Surely there were none of the enemy behind them. Why should the forces be firing?

"Here, some one climb a tree! Take this glass!" shouted Colonel Hand.

George stepped forward. It was no effort for him to make his way up into the branches; but he did not need the glass, and his heart stood still. He could hardly form the words that were upon his lips. What he had seen was this: Gleams of red flaring here and there along the hill-side behind them.

"We are surrounded," he shouted down, and slid through the branches with a crash.

Some of the riflemen were sent back to meet the new forces in the rear, but by this time the firing had commenced along the line, and the Hessians were swarming up the hill. So confused now became events that George could only see what happened close to him, and even of that his recollections were most vague.

A tall form burst through the bushes, and a great red-bearded face thrust itself over the redoubt. In an instant the forms seemed to be all around him. The shouts varied, first in one direction and then another. He could never forget the horror with which he saw a tall Hessian draw back his bayonet at a young figure on the ground.

Twigs snapped and crackled all around, the bullets ripped through the leaves of the trees, and the first thing the young sergeant knew he was standing breast-high in a thicket, and before him stood a green-coated foreigner who was breathing hard from the charge through the brush, and who held at George's throat the point of a bayonet.

Captain Clarkson's company was at the extreme left wing. A little brook ran down the hollow, and most of the fighting had been at the front and to the left.

George scarcely noticed the shrieks and cries for mercy and the groans. His eye was upon the figure standing in front of him, and the blade of the roughly made sword he carried was grating against the bayonet that was thrusting at him viciously. Twice he parried, and then his opponent lunged again. The hilt and the musket came together with a clash. George lost his footing, tripped over a fallen branch, and fell backwards; but so great was the force of the lunge the green-coated soldier had levelled at him that the latter too lost his balance and pitched forward. Both fell over the bank of the little brook and rolled down into the shallow water. They were now out of sight of the fighting and locked in each other's arms. The Hessian snapped with his teeth like a cornered dog, and with his fingers tried to close about George's throat. But the boy was strong and wiry, and the man was tired from his sharp run up the hill. Over and over they went in the sand and pebbles, the young American silent, but the Hessian grunting and cursing in his foreign tongue. At last George was on top, and his hand closed about a large stone. He struck the man a heavy blow between the eyes, and the latter relaxed his hold. He lay there with his body half in the muddy waters of the brook.

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George looked about him. The firing had now grown less and less, but the shouts were still heard, and occasionally a bullet whistled through the trees. Stooping, he picked up his dented sword, and without a glance at the figure of the senseless German, made his way down the stream. He crawled under the corner of a rail fence, and lay there in the ferns trying to get his breath.

It was evident that Colonel Hand's brave forces had been destroyed; the Americans had been driven back and defeated.

As night came on George moved from his hiding-place, and crawling on his hands and knees, made his way again to the top of the incline. And now his experience "playing Injun" at Stanham Mills came into good use. He knew that the Americans must be to the northward.

Occasionally, as he went through the bushes, he stumbled across the victims of the Hessians' fury, and, strange to say, again a feeling of unreality came over him, his mind was so fixed on his own dangerous position.

Watch-fires were on every side. Once or twice he had, unseen, crawled across the beat of a British sentry, and in this way he entered the American lines. In fact, he did not know he was there until he saw the heavy earth-works, and heard a voice exclaim quite close to him:

"New York is lost, but we can whip them in New Jersey, I can promise you."

George knew that voice in an instant. He arose from behind the stone wall along which he had been crawling—for he had long since been in among the houses. "Colonel Hewes!" he said. "Oh, Colonel Hewes!"

The party gathered about the fire in the road-side started.

"Who's there? Who called me?" inquired the one who had been speaking.

"I, George Frothingham," was the reply.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE LITTLE GOOSE'S DREAM.

A little goose eight months old—just old enough to be a very lively goose, and not of a sufficiently mature age to be a Christmas goose—stood upon the bank of the old mill-pond, lost in as pensive a reverie as it is possible for a little goose of ordinary intelligence to indulge in. She felt very sad and sore in spirit—sad, because the pond was frozen as stiff as the dignity of a prime minister, and sore, because she had but a short time before flopped down off the bank for a swim, only to experience, upon coming in contact with the ice, a shock that almost snapped her little wish-bone in twain. So the poor little goose stood upon one foot while she buried the other in her plumage that she might rub the sore spot. And while she stood in this position she became drowsy in the Christmas-flavored air, and thrusting her head beneath her wing fell asleep.

And while she was lost in slumber, she dreamed that she was a little toy goose in a shop window on a busy thoroughfare. The window was dressed for the Christmas season, and the poor young goose felt very humble and out of place in the society of so many toy animals of a superior order. Instead of being able to waddle about, she was fixed in a stationary position upon an inclined platform, which worked up and down, after the manner of an accordion, and created a sound which the maker believed children would accept as a faithful imitation of the anserine voice. Now this little toy goose was quite indignant to think that her notes were so unnatural, for they were really no more like those of a goose than a locomotive whistle is like a cornet solo. Still, the little goose determined to make the best of the situation, and it is only fair to say that her vanity was greatly tickled when she saw the children coming from school pause at the window and look at her eagerly. A few days before Christmas the little toy goose felt very sad and lonely when a fat man with great white whiskers came in and purchased her for some little boy, for she had become very fond of a toy ostrich, an old companion in the window, and had always cherished the fond hope that they might be purchased by the same person. And it almost made her cry when she was wrapped in a piece of brown paper and thrust into the darkness of the valise of her purchaser. Out of the store she went, she knew not where until she was removed from her paper wrapper in a small country house and set on a nursery mantel-piece, beside the clock, whose ticking made her so nervous that she couldn't find the rest she so greatly needed. A cotton lamb and a woollen doll, however, reminded her of the shop window, and she would probably have felt perfectly happy if she could only have forgotten her old friend the toy ostrich. Fortunately, while thinking of the ostrich and the bitter pangs of enforced separation, the clock stopped, and she fell asleep. In the morning she was taken with the other Christmas toys (which the fat man with the white whiskers had left) right into bed by Reginald, who made her squeak with great delight.

And when he took her into the bath-room she fairly yearned to be in the tub with him and his tin steamboat.

"Oh, how I want to swim!" thought the little goose, as she looked at the dimpled water, and envied the happy steamboat. "But then I must remember that I am made of pasteboard, and that if I should go into the water it would surely result in my having my paint washed off, even if I should not turn into pulp and sink. But some day I shall be a great big goose— No, I shall not, because I don't grow. I shall always be the same size and age—"

Here she was interrupted by Reginald's little terrier, who came into the room and commenced to paw her about playfully on the white pine floor. He accidentally scratched out one of her eyes, and this made her sadder than ever, because she could only see what was going on on one side of her. And what made it worse, her eye could not be restored with glue, because it had fallen through a knot-hole. A day or two later the little toy goose was placed upon the dining-room window-sill in such a position that she could look out on the barn-yard. There she saw geese wandering around at will as their fancies directed them. And it made her feel that it was indeed a sorry lot to be a pasteboard, stationary toy goose, instead of being a real live specimen hatched under fortune's star. She saw them talking in a most sociable manner, just as little Reginald's mother and the other members of the church sewing society talked when that body met in the library down-stairs.

Then the little goose tried to close its eye upon a tragedy without, but couldn't, because it was not, and never had been, in the enjoyment of eyelids. So she had to look on while the coachman chased the flock. He finally caught a large lordly gander, and chopping his head off, started with him towards the kitchen. The others set up such a cackling as has never been heard since the geese were instrumental in saving Rome from the invading Gaul.

And the cackling was so intense that it woke the little goose from her dream, and she heard all her sisters and brothers and uncles and aunts flapping their wings and cackling at a great rate. And when she saw Michael carrying an axe in one hand and a gander in the other towards the house, her tender soul heaved with emotion, and two tears coursed down her cheeks like twin pearls as she observed,

"Alas! they have gone and killed poor Uncle William to play the star part at the Christmas feast!"

R. K. MUNKITTRICK.



The Little Giant.

By Thomas Dunn English.

CHAPTER I.

Once upon a time, in the country of the giants, there lived a young man who was the mock of all his companions because he was somewhat deficient in the qualities of a first-rate giant. He was very little, being not seven feet high, while not one of his kinsfolk were less than ten; he had so little bodily strength that he could scarcely lift an ox; and he was so slow in his movements that his companions, in derision, called him Gofaster. Although that was not his name, it clung to him, and he was never known by any other. He had some merits, however; for he was not only sensible and full of truthfulness and honor, but so good-natured and kind-hearted that he was ever ready to do a good turn to others, and would not harm even the meanest creeping thing.



**GOFASTER FALLS IN WITH THE
COWARDLY GIANTS.**

It chanced one day that Gofaster fell in with some giants who were great cowards, but who took advantage of their superior strength to cuff him and tweak his nose. As he had the heart of a lion, he fought them lustily. But their numbers and strength were too much for him, and so they overcame him and beat him severely. Then they carried away his cap, his jerkin, and his shoes, leaving his head, back, and feet bare, and his body bruised.

Poor Gofaster, so soon as his tormentors had gone, wandered into the woodland in no very pleasant frame of mind. Bewailing his unhappy lot, he came across a wretched hut with a low door, through which he entered by stooping. He found there no occupants nor sign of human habitation but a small heap of clothes, which lay upon the earthen floor. Examining these, he found them to consist of a cap, a jerkin, and a pair of shoes. They all seemed too small for him, but on trying them on they fitted admirably.

"They are just what I want," said he, "and it is good fortune to find them. On second thoughts, however, I shall put them off, for they are not mine, and I must not, because of my need, rob another."

"You may take them and welcome," said a voice. "I have no use for them for eleven months, and before that time you can return them to me, as you will then have other garments to wear."

"But who are you," said Gofaster, "and where are you?"

"I am a Phooka," said the voice, "and my name is Shon. I am condemned to be invisible for eleven months of the year, and banishment from Wales, from whence I came, is also my penalty."

"But what was your fault?" asked Gofaster.

"My fault is like yours," said the goblin: "I am naturally too good-natured. The Phookas, to whom I belong, are not only full of mischief, but ill-natured in the pranks they play upon men. I am mischievous also, but never to any one's hurt or serious annoyance. Hence it is that the King of the Phookas has banished me from Wales for three years, and my term will not expire for a twelvemonth. He has also condemned me to be visible for only one month in the year. I have watched you for months. I am the little old man whom you helped out of a ditch to your own discomfort. I sympathize with you in your distress, and, if you take my counsel, will bring you to good fortune."

"That is very kind of you," said Gofaster. "But how?"

"A thousand miles from here, in the far north," replied the Phooka, "in the city of Huperborea, there reigns a King named Jornet, who has an only child—a daughter called Amber. The Huperboreans are what you would call dwarfs, being under five feet in height, with the exception of the King, who is three inches taller than any of his subjects. He married in the country of the giants where you live, and his daughter, though much smaller than her mother, is within two inches of your height. She is beautiful, intelligent, and affectionate, but no one of the princes around have sought her hand, because of her height. Her father has been enraged at this, and declares that the first man coming to his country, though he be a private gentleman, if taller than

she, provided he does three things for the benefit of the state, shall be her husband and succeed to the crown. Many have tried, having heard of these conditions, but have done nothing worthy of the prize; besides, none of them found favor in the eyes of the Princess Amber, and that is a part of the conditions. You shall go, and you shall win."

"But how am I to get there, so great a distance? and how am I to support myself when there? and what am I to do if I were to get there?"

"Listen," said the Phooka. "The clothes you have assumed have magic powers. The cap is the cap of intellect, and makes you see clearly and determine correctly. When in doubt, state the case in your own mind; when you have come to what you should do, the cap will bind itself tightly to your head. The jerkin is the jerkin of strength. While you wear it you will have four times the strength of other men. The shoes are the shoes of endurance. So long as they are on your feet you will be able to bear any toil without fatigue. As for means to support you, place your hand in your pocket and draw out a purse which it contains."

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Gofaster obeyed, and drew out a small silken purse. "Why, this," he said, "contains but one coin—a broad gold piece."

"Take out the coin and put it in your pocket." And Gofaster obeyed.

"Why," said the giant, "there is another piece in the purse."

"Do with that as you did with the other." And Gofaster did so.

"Well," said the giant, "there seems to be another still."

"As often as you draw out," said the goblin, "from that inexhaustible treasury it will be replaced by another. And now I can transport you to Huperborea. You could not get there without my assistance, for between that country and this there are hundreds of miles of eternal ice and snow, with a very short season of growth of stunted herbage, with few animals that you could kill for support; and those who have tried to visit this great open sea, which skirts the Huperborea kingdom, have either been obliged to turn back or have perished miserably. I have the power to transport you thither. How will you go? Above, below, or between?"

Gofaster said to himself, "Which shall it be? Shall I go upward or on the ground—that seems best—or midway?"

When he uttered to himself "midway" the cap clasped itself tightly to his head, so he answered, "Midway."

The goblin gave a hollow laugh. "The cap has counselled you wisely," he said. "Had you said above, I should have carried you so high that you would have almost died of terror before we ended our short journey. Had you said on the ground, you would have been dragged over rocks and bushes, so as to get there much hurt, and I would have had no power to change this. But as you have said midway, you will have a swift and pleasant journey. Let us depart."



THE JOURNEY TO HUPERBOREA.

Gofaster felt something take his hand and lead him out of the door. Then he was drawn upward slightly, and forward, with great speed but no discomfort. It was noon when they started. They passed over lakes, rivers, and mountains, the weather changing to somewhat more chilly from what they had departed; and it seemed as though they must have gone the whole night through without his knowing it, for when they gently touched the ground at the end of the journey there appeared to Gofaster the rays of the morning sun.

CHAPTER II.

The place where the giant alighted was nearly in front of what, in spite of its two stories, seemed to be a mere hut. It was surrounded by a well-kept garden.

"I wonder," said Gofaster, aloud, "if I will get shelter here for the night."

A hollow laugh at his elbow showed that his friend had not departed. "The days here," said the goblin, "are six months long, and the nights are just as long as the days. During the day, which has just begun, the weather is tolerably comfortable, and mid-day is the only summer the Huperboreans have; the night is intensely cold, but you will be able to purchase furs to make you comfortable. The owner of this house is a man of fair fortune, but as he lives on the outskirts of the city, apart somewhat from his fellows, he likes to entertain travellers if he take the least fancy toward them at sight. Knock, and make your bargain with him, for you will find there a good place to stay for a while, and its owner can give you whatever information you require about the King, the Court, and the people."

Gofaster obeyed the commands of his monitor. He entered the pathway, and, on arriving at the door, rapped. In a moment or so the door was opened, and there stood a slender old man, with a face full of wrinkles, in which appeared a pair of sharp, twinkling eyes.

"I am called Gofaster," said the giant, bowing, "and am on a visit to this country unattended. I am informed that you occasionally entertain travellers, and if you could make room for me I should feel under obligation, and be prepared to compensate you fairly."



**"THERE IS NO BEDSTEAD
LONG ENOUGH FOR YOU."**

The host looked up and said, "You are one of the giants, and would have to sleep on the floor, for there is no bedstead long enough for you."

"That would suit me very well," said Gofaster.

"My terms are two lyro a day," said the other, "and my name is Hepsone."

"I am not familiar," said the giant, "with the coin of this country."

"This is a lyro," replied Hepsone, taking from his pocket and displaying a coin of about the size of a half-dollar.

"I do not have silver," returned the giant, producing a coin from his pocket. "How many lyros are there in this?"

Hepsone looked at it curiously. "About fifteen, I should say," was his answer.

"In my country," said the giant, "it would take twenty of such coin as that you show me to balance this, but I suppose silver is more valuable here. Your terms are reasonable, and I accept them with thanks."

"Come in, then," said Hepsone, and they entered.

The door opened into a side hall about a foot higher than the giant's head; for though he had to stoop to enter, when once in he easily stood upright.

"Pray be seated," said Hepsone; "and as we have an hour left before breakfast, let us talk a little. May I ask why you came here—on business or pleasure?"

"On pleasure, I hope," replied Gofaster; "and that I may more readily secure it I should like to know something about the King, the royal family, and the nobles of the people. Is your King a good one?"

"As kings go, yes," replied Hepsone. "As his faithful subject, I have no fault to find with him, nor is there any occasion. He rules as justly as his Prime-minister, Count Snarlitz, will let him, is very kind-hearted and anxious for the good of his people, but he generally leaves public affairs to his ministers, especially in the season of hunting, of which sport he is very fond. He hunts to-day in the forest a mile beyond, and if you care to look at him you need only go there after breakfast, and probably will be able to cross his path. As for the royal family, it is a very small one. The Queen died five years since, and the King has declared that he will never again marry. He has only one child, a daughter, who is distinguished from the ladies of the Court by the fact that she is nearly as tall as you. She is very lovely, in spite of her size, and is almost worshipped by the mass of people, who desire to see her mated in order that the succession may not go to a distant connection of the King, a man who is hated by all classes. As for the people, they are like the people everywhere, I suppose. There is a sprinkling of honest men, another of wise men, as many as both of rogues, and all the rest are fools."

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In the course of the conversation Gofaster learned some facts of interest. He found that life must be very dreary indeed during the six months of night the people had, their main light coming from torches made from split pieces of pine, and all business being suspended not only during hours of sleep, but in the intervals of meals, until the six months of day came back. He also learned that the people suffered every month from a species of water famine. The water was supplied from a reservoir on a high hill back of the city, which was fed from a large spring; for a month at a time the spring ceased to flow, the reservoir was drained dry, and water for domestic purposes of any kind had to be brought from a distance.

In this reservoir there lived a huge water dragon over fifty feet long who was called Slander; and no one could get there to examine the cause of the stoppage on account of the breath of this brute, which breath poisoned every one who came within reach of it.

After more conversation breakfast was announced, and our traveller found the meal to be a very good one and well served, though his seat was so low that as he sat there his knees were on a level with the top of the table. After breakfast he asked Hepsone how he should manage to purchase a wardrobe, as he supposed there was no ready-made clothing in the city beyond which would fit him.

"As for that," said Hepsone, "there need be no trouble. I know a very worthy tailor who will be glad to make you anything that you desire at the shortest notice, and though he makes for some of the nobles of the Court, will be ready, for cash, to do it reasonably. If you say so, I will send for him at once."

To this Gofaster assented, and said he would go to the forest when the meal closed, and see if his Majesty and the nobles were there, engaged in the hunt. "But," he added, "I might meet with some wild beast, and should like to have a weapon to defend myself."

"As for that," replied Hepsone, "I can serve you there too. I had a lodger a year since who was here with the hope of marrying the Princess Amber, but he failed to win her favor or do anything worthy of note. His money ran out at the last, and in part settlement of his account with me he left a very valuable sword. As it is too long for any of our people, I have had it by me ever since. You might gird that upon you, but, if I may advise you, I would also take that battle-axe you see on the wall, which you will find a more ready weapon in a close encounter."

Gofaster accepted both these offers, and with sword at his side and battle-axe in hand, started off in the direction of the forest, which he soon reached. He wandered there for some time without meeting any one or anything, until finally he heard the sound of a horn. Making his way in that direction, he saw a group of men, and among them one who was a little taller than the others, whom, from that fact, and also because he was the only one bonneted, he inferred to be the King. He placed himself beside a huge fir tree, which was almost the sole kind in the forest, in order to observe more closely; but at that moment the King waved his hand, and the group, apparently at his order, broke and dispersed in various directions.

The giant made his way at a respectful distance after the King, who was attended only by a large hound. The latter was fleet of foot, but as the strides of the giant were one-half as long again as those of the King, Gofaster was enabled to keep at the same distance without exertion. For a half-hour nothing out of the way occurred, nor did the hound seem to put up any game. At length the animal started, stopped, sniffed the air, and with a loud bay bounded off, followed quickly by the King, and, in turn, by Gofaster. As the two latter ran they heard the sound of a conflict, with a yelp of pain from the dog, and both came suddenly to an open space, where they found that the animal had encountered a huge white bear, for whom he was no match, and had speedily been despatched by his antagonist.

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The King was armed only with a hunting-spear and sword, and the bear, made furious by the attack of the dog, at once turned upon his human enemy. The latter, spear in hand, stood firmly; but the bear, with a sweep of his powerful arm, struck the weapon with such force sidewise as to shatter the shaft. In an instant more the monarch, who had drawn his sword, would have been unable to make any serious resistance; but Gofaster, who had rushed forward, and whose step had not attracted the attention of the beast, drove his battle-axe with full force into the skull of the bear, and the huge animal fell dead at the feet of the King.

King Jornet coolly returned his sword to its scabbard. "Sir Stranger," said he, "you have rendered us a service most opportune. Eighteen inches of cold steel would have no chance against that brute's claws. May I ask to whom I am indebted for this aid?"

"A mere private gentleman," replied Gofaster, "from the country of the giants, who is travelling here for pleasure, and who happily strolled this way this morning. May I ask whom I have had the honor of serving?"

"I am the King," said the latter, "and I should be glad to see you at Court as early as may suit your convenience, that I may express my thanks in a more fitting way than I can do now."

"I shall not fail to obey your Majesty's command," said the giant, bowing.

"And your name?" asked the King.

"Gofaster, your Majesty."

"Well, then, *Count* Gofaster," said the King, laying emphasis on the title, "in less than a week we shall expect to see you." The King bowed, which the giant took to be an expression that he desired him not to be present when his courtiers came; and as the King applied his horn to his lips and sounded a few notes, Gofaster returned to the house of Hepsone.

Shortly after his departure the courtiers came in from various directions, and looked with astonishment at the bear and the dead hound.

"He was killed by a stranger, who came in good time," said the King, pointing to the dead bear; but he gave no further word of explanation.

CHAPTER III.

On his return to the house of Hepsone, Gofaster found there a crooked little man, whom his host introduced as Snipper, the tailor. After a bargain had been made, and as the tailor was measuring his new customer—which in order to do completely he was obliged to stand on a stool—Hepsone examined the battle-axe, which the giant had laid aside.

"Why," said he, "the edge of this is nicked in two places, and it is marked with blood. Did you meet with game?"

"Yes," said the giant, "a white bear, and he lies there in the forest."

"A white bear!" cried the host, in amazement. "Did you have the courage to face a brute like that?"

"Oh," replied Gofaster, laughing, "I dealt him a coward's blow from behind; but I take no shame

for it, since I would have had no chance had I faced him."

"I should like to know all about it," said Hepsone, eagerly.

"At some other time, but not now," said the giant, for he reflected that the King might not wish the adventure recounted without his consent.

After the departure of the tailor the giant took another stroll, in order to gain an appetite for dinner. This time he made his way up a hill, whose sides were covered with small evergreen-bushes, from whose summit he thought he would obtain a good view of the town below. As he advanced higher the bushes disappeared, and the ground was barren and destitute of herbage. He then recognized a disagreeable odor, which increased as he advanced. He feared that he was approaching the abode of the dragon, but could see no signs of the beast or his habitation. He came at length to some openings in the ground, which emitted a stench that seemed strangely familiar.

"Why," said he, "this resembles the gas springs which we have in my country, which we conduct through pipes to the town, and use it for purposes of illumination and heat. I must remember this, and take advantage of it."

Three days later the tailor returned with his new clothes. They fitted perfectly, and he felt himself ready for the audience.

As he was hesitating whether or not to seek the King, he heard horses' hoofs without, and, looking through the low window, beheld a group of gentlemen, each of less than medium height, who were mounted upon ponies. They were in conversation with his host, and as they spake loudly, he heard their words.

"We have been seeking through the town," said the spokesman, "for a foreign gentleman, the Count Gofaster, and not finding him, have come here with the hope that he might lodge with you."

"There is a gentleman here," said Hepsone, "but I did not know that he was a Count. Has he done anything wrong?"

"Not that I know of," said the other, laughing; "but his Majesty the King and her Royal Highness the Princess Amber are desirous of seeing him, and we are ordered to summon him to Court."

At this Gofaster emerged from the door and confronted the group. "I am Gofaster," he said, "and the gracious wishes of his Majesty are commands. I shall have the honor of seeking an audience without delay."

"We have brought a horse for your convenience, Count," said the spokesman, pointing to a gaudily caparisoned pony about twelve hands high.

The giant could scarcely suppress a laugh. "I think," said he, dryly, "that walking would be an easier mode of travelling. With your permission, I shall accompany you on foot."



GOFASTER ESCORTED TO THE KING'S PALACE.

The party then set out, and made their way through the town to the royal palace. Curious crowds lined the narrow streets, and were with difficulty kept back by the police, so eager were they to see this gigantic stranger.

"Count," said the monarch, as he received him in the palace, "we have sent for you because we were impatient to thank you in this public manner for the service you so promptly rendered to our person, and to welcome to our Court a nobleman whom we hope to see one of its chiefest ornaments. Let me present you to Count Snarlitz, our Prime-minister."

Gofaster and Snarlitz bowed to each other, the former with good-humor, and the latter with a sneer on his lip and a twinkle of ill will in his eye which the giant did not fail to recognize.

"In faith," said the giant to himself, "I feel this to be an enemy, and will have to be on guard. He fears that I will be a favorite, and may interfere with his hold on the King."

The King now descended from his throne, followed by the Princess, to whom Gofaster was presented. At a signal from the King, Snarlitz and the others fell back, and the Princess added her thanks in a manner that showed her appreciation of the service rendered and but half-concealed admiration for the new-comer.

At command of the King, Gofaster was assigned apartments in the royal palace, and a week thereafter, the faithful tailor having fully stocked his wardrobe, he took possession of them.

Before this, however, a banquet was given in his honor, and at this Count Snarlitz changed his manner in the most marked way, and paid the giant the most profound deference, indulging in compliments at times so extreme as to be offensive.

Before the guests had arisen from the board the Prime-minister, in the course of conversation, said: "If it please your Majesty, I look upon it as most fortunate that this gallant gentleman is one

who is able to render a most marked service to the state. He is the only one, I think, who has the courage and the power to face and destroy the powerful dragon of the reservoir."

"No, no!" said the Princess Amber, instantly; "that is too perilous."

"Nay, daughter," said the King, "let us hear what the Count himself has to say on the matter."

Gofaster hesitated a moment. His cap, which had already given him such trusty counsel, had been removed, and he could not replace it in the King's presence; but his embarrassment was at once relieved. A hollow laugh at his elbow told him that his invisible friend, the Phooka, was there, and he heard a voice unheard by the others, which said to him, "Accept for a week hence."

Then Gofaster arose, and bowing to the King, said, "In a week from this time, with your Majesty's permission, I shall undertake the adventure."

To his great delight, the giant saw the Princess turn pale at this announcement, and his heart beat high with hope. But after the banquet was over, and he had taken his leave, he felt that he had done a rash thing.

"How shall I be able," he said, "to face, much less to overcome, this terrible Slander, whose breath is poison to all who confront it."

"Easily enough," said the voice of the Phooka in his ear. "There is a little herb called truth, which grows in out-of-the-way places, and I can lead you to it. Mix that with honey, of which the dragon is extremely fond, and which he can scent at some distance. He will not detect the mixture, but eat the honey greedily, and the truth in it will kill him."

CHAPTER IV.

The night before the day he had fixed for the adventure Gofaster went to the house of Hepsone, where he slept. Before retiring he sent for a pot of honey, which was brought him.

The next morning, with the honey and a large dish, he went from the hut of Hepsone in search of the herb called truth. It was soon obtained, for he who seeks truth earnestly can always find it. Gathering a quantity, he mixed it thoroughly with the honey; and then, still under the Phooka's direction, travelled to a spot at no great distance from the reservoir, where he placed the great dish on the ground, poured into it the contents of the jar, and retreated to a safe distance, where from a grove he could observe events. He had not long to wait. He heard a peculiar sound, which satisfied him that the great beast had scented the honey and would proceed in search of it. Standing behind a tree, he saw the animal emerge into an open space, and was struck with something like fear when he beheld its immense size. This was not unmixed with admiration. The body of the animal as it appeared approaching through the trees was covered with glittering scales, which flashed in the sunlight at every motion. It hurried eagerly to the honey, which it lapped up with its tongue, after the manner of the dog, until he had entirely cleaned the dish of its contents, swallowing at the same time the herb. He stood with what appeared to be an air of satisfaction for some time, glancing around, so that Gofaster was obliged to hide himself still more effectually behind the trunk, lest he might be seen.

After a while a noise as of some one beating the earth furiously caused the giant to peer cautiously from one side of his hiding-place. There he beheld the dragon making the most terrible contortions, beating the ground with his long and massive tail, and apparently suffering great agony. This continued for some time; then the motion of the beast became weaker, and finally, with a terrific roar, it lay over on its back and became perfectly motionless.

"It may not be dead," said Gofaster, "and I had better wait."

"Slander is dead!" said the voice of the Phooka. "Truth has killed him. You may advance without fear and cut off his head."

"Why should I do that?" said the giant.

"Simply as an evidence of your exploit; otherwise your friend Count Snarlitz might not be convinced. Beware of the Count."

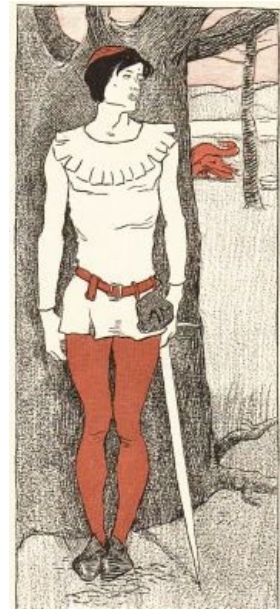
"I have seen enough to make me do that already," replied Gofaster.

"Very good; but you must have friends at Court. There are two parties there; that of Count Snarlitz is a power just now, but he has a rival in Count Merit, and you must attach yourself to him."

"But why should I," inquired the giant, "a stranger here, meddle in Court politics? Is it not safer to stand between both and lean to neither, and thus get none of the tumble when the seesaw goes up or down?"

"Did you ever, as a boy, play at seesaw?" asked the Phooka.

"Yes, and generally stood in the centre and balanced myself."



**THE DRAGON
MAKES FOR THE
POT OF HONEY.**

"Then," said the Phooka, "you had all the tumbles and none of the rides. Make yourself friends with Count Merit."

"I see," replied the giant.

By this time they had reached the dead dragon, and with a few powerful strokes of his huge sword Gofaster severed the head from the body. Raising it with ease, through the immense strength conveyed by the jerkin, the giant proceeded towards the house of Hepsone. The weight he bore was enormous, but the shoes of endurance played their part well, and it seemed to him almost as light as a feather.



GOFASTER CARRIES THE DRAGON'S HEAD TO TOWN.

Before he had gone half a mile he came upon some boys gathering wild berries, which grew here and there upon the sides of the declivity. They looked at the head of the beast in wonder, and then scampered to the town with the news that the dragon had been slain.

By the time Gofaster reached his lodging-place he found it surrounded by groups of the townsfolk, who had come to verify the truth of the story told by the boys. Soon there came others and others; by night—that is, by the night of the giant, for he kept time by his watch, and not by the sun—the place was surrounded by a crowd, whose shouts rent the air, and who hailed Gofaster as the great benefactor of the state.

Presently a troop of soldiers having a small wagon came, and on the vehicle they brought Gofaster placed the head, and bidding adieu to Hepsone, the giant made his way with it through the crowds that accompanied and hovered around him until he entered the palace grounds, where the King and Court, having been apprised of the exploit, waited to receive the trophy and honor the victor.

There was but one exception to the general rejoicing and congratulations. Count Snarlitz stood on one side, moody and depressed. One gentleman advanced from the group and presented his hand to Gofaster.

"Count," said he, "let me introduce myself. I am Count Merit, and I congratulate you on the eminent service you have this day rendered the state."

"I like this man," said the giant to himself, as he took the proffered hand. Bowing to the King, he glanced timidly at the Princess Amber.

She said nothing, but the expression in her eyes and the color that came and went in her face made his heart throb with joy.

"Count," said the King, advancing, "for the service you have this day rendered we are not able to fully compensate you, but we shall create you Knight Grand Cross of the New Noble Order of the White Bear, which we have this day established, and call you to our Privy Council. If there be anything you desire, you have only to name it."

"With my thanks for your Majesty's gracious favor already bestowed, I have only to ask a private audience, that I may communicate to your Majesty a matter of importance."

"By all means," said the King. "Accompany me to my private cabinet. Daughter, we will excuse your attendance."

"If your Majesty please," interposed Gofaster, "there is no reason why her Royal Highness should not be present. They say a woman cannot keep a secret, but I have found them to be the most trusty confidantes."

"You must have a sister or a sweetheart," said the Princess Amber.

"Neither, your Royal Highness."

"Then," said the Princess, smiling, "you remember your mother."

"Now," said the King, as the three entered the cabinet, "I am ready to listen."

Gofaster then spoke of the insufficient means of light during the six months of night peculiar to the country, and spoke of his discovery of the gas springs.

"Yes," said the King, "we all know it; it is a great injury in rainy weather, when the stench is blown into the town, to the annoyance of our people as well as to ourself. Attempts have been made to fill these holes up, but everything thrown in is ejected with some force, or, if very heavy, disappears without making any marked change. If you could rid us of it you would confer the last of the three great favors of the state, and then—" With these words he glanced at Princess Amber, who blushed.

Gofaster now detailed his plan to the King, by which he hoped to conduct the gas—which was inflammable—safely into the royal palace and through the town for the purposes of illumination. The King was struck with the idea, but said it was impracticable on account of the expense. The

taxes were already as high as the people could well bear, and the treasury was nearly empty.

"But," said Gofaster, "I have ample means, and I propose to do this at my own expense."

"You shall have our permission, and may make it a monopoly to your own advantage."

"That I do not desire," replied the giant. "It is enough if I can give more comfort to your people, and will aid in making your Majesty's reign still more notable."

CHAPTER V.

Presently there ran a rumor through the town that Count Gofaster, who had already performed two notable exploits, was engaged in something which promised to be of great advantage to the people of the capital city. What that was no one knew besides the King and Princess, but it was noticed that a number of mechanics, among them a noted boiler-maker, had been sent for, and visited the apartments of Gofaster in the palace, whence they emerged with countenances of satisfaction, which proved they were to be employed on a job they deemed to be profitable; but they had been forbidden to speak on the matter until the time came.

It was a month before even they learned the nature of the undertaking, and in the mean while other rumors arose of a different nature. It was whispered around that the stranger was a foreign prince in disguise, a son of the King of Giant-land, and that he was merely paving the way to an attempt to dethrone King Jornet and crown himself instead. Some believed the story, and some did not. The party of Count Snarlitz were active in circulating and commenting upon the charge, while the party of Count Merit ridiculed it and branded it as an absurdity. The people loved their King, but the mass of them remembered that Gofaster had saved his Majesty from death, and had destroyed one of the greatest perils to the state; and the general current of opinion sided with the party of Count Merit. It was well known too by this time that the Princess Amber—who was even more beloved than her father—favored the stranger, who had nothing to gain but almost everything to lose by sinister conduct. Of this Gofaster would have known nothing, perhaps, had it not been for his friend the Phooka, who told him of the rumors and the discussion thereon.

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These, he said, were through Count Snarlitz, who would probably make them the basis of charges later on, leaving no means untried which would crush this stranger, to whom he had taken an invincible dislike. "Count Merit," said the Phooka, "well divines the object of this movement and who has set it on foot, and will use it as a lever to overthrow his rival and elevate himself to power. You now see the advantage of having gained a friend in Count Merit. Go on with your present design, and let these parties in the mean time fight it out. It is enough for you to face the danger openly when it presents itself."

Gofaster took this advice, and making no sign that he knew of the intrigues around him, proceeded with his work. Large iron tubes were brought from time to time to the park around the palace, and to various points between that and the gas springs, and these were carefully guarded. Then a troop of laborers, like busy ants, began to delve around the gas springs, excavating a large circle, and from thence making a ditch down the hill and through the town so far as the royal palace: a cross ditch was also made along the principal street.

When the authorities, under the direction of the Minister of the Interior, prepared to stop this work, they were shown the King's order investing Gofaster with full power. Count Snarlitz, on learning of this, waited upon the King, and supposing that his services could not be dispensed with, complained that a royal order had been issued, contrary to form, without being attested by him, and tendered his resignation. To his great surprise and chagrin, the King accepted it, and sent for Count Merit, whom he commanded to form a ministry.

Though there were no newspapers but one—the *Court Journal*—and this was seen by but few people, the news of the downfall of the Snarlitz ministry went from mouth to ear throughout the country. Count Snarlitz had been so haughty and overbearing that he had few friends among the common folk; and among the nobles his party speedily diminished when it was discovered that he had lost the confidence of the King, and that the Princess Amber was decidedly unfriendly to him. He retired from office, secretly vowing vengeance on the stranger, and waiting for an opportunity to gratify his malice.

The people soon forgot all about him in their wonder at the new and strange work going on under their eyes. They speculated a deal upon it without learning its object, since none, with the exception of Gofaster, knew that the gas of the springs could be burned, and if they had would not have believed that it could be done with safety.

Even when the masons had built a wall around the cavity that had been made at the springs, and immense columns had been erected around it, they were still ignorant, and their wonder heightened. It was only when the boiler-makers had completed a huge tank which filled the cavity, and connected the pipes therewith—smaller tubes having been laid in the King's palace, and others connected with the pipes buried in the streets—that the people became aware of what was to be done.

And now there arose a whisper around which soon deepened into clamor. It was said that the purpose of Gofaster was to force this deadly gas into the palace, killing the King and Court, and, by throwing the bulk of it into the town, so enfeeble the people, as well as the army, that the place would become a ready prey to a band of giants, who were to come no one knew how, and whence no one could tell.

The populace fell under the influence of this rumor, scandalously circulated by the Snarlitz

faction, and assembling in large numbers, marched to the palace, where they demanded the cessation of the dangerous work and the immediate banishment of Count Gofaster from the realm. The new Prime-minister had not, however, been idle. Fearing this uprising, and having been let into this secret by the giant, he had without noise marched a considerable military force into the park, and when the rioters entered they were confronted by a body of soldiers drawn up in line. The mob hesitated, and a mob which hesitates can easily be diverted from its purpose. It was armed after a fashion, but had no system or discipline, and stood there fearing to advance or retreat.

At that moment the King and his daughter suddenly appeared upon the palace steps. A hoarse roar arose from the multitude, demanding the banishment, if not the death, of the stranger, who was to destroy them all.

The King waved his hand for silence, but the alarm of the people seemed to be intensified by the momentary check; and the clamor increased in violence. It seemed as though a revolution were imminent, not merely of the ministry, but one that imperilled the King himself. At that moment the Princess Amber stepped forward, and the crowd was hushed to silence, for the Princess was beloved of the common people exceedingly. Her interest in their needs and sufferings, her many benefactions, and the well-known fact of her influence with her royal father—all these had at various times succeeded in lowering the exactions of the Prime-ministers, and in relieving the people from many abuses that had crept into the state. She had, therefore, never appeared before them without exciting admiration.

"Good people," she said, "can you not trust in what I tell you?"

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The tide was turned in an instant, and the cry came as if from one man, "Yes, we can trust you!"

"Then," she said, "hear me. Bad men have abused your confidence. We have full knowledge of what is doing and why it has been done; it is for the benefit of all of you; it is to cheer your homes and to make life during the dreary winter nights not only endurable, but one that you can enjoy. Continue to trust me, who never have deceived any one. Go home peaceably and quietly, and with confidence in what I tell you, await a happy result."

There is nothing so sudden as the reaction of a mob. Smiles succeeded frowns, the crowd gave loud cheers for the Princess, and then melted slowly and quietly away. The danger to the throne had passed.

CHAPTER VI.

The work done inside the King's palace was not seen by the multitude, but they saw large pipes laid in the ditches, the ditches themselves filled up, and a long row of tubes rising ten or twelve feet in the air, whose uses they could not divine. But in spite of the diverse rumors still circulated by the Snarlitz faction, the people cheered themselves with the reassuring words of the Princess Amber, and patiently awaited results. This was strengthened by the reports of the workmen who were employed in the palace, and who averred—though they were bound to secrecy—that what was to be done would be a great public benefit. Much speculation was indulged in as to what the secret doings were, but after a time this faded out; the people minded their own affairs, and only talked about the matter occasionally when they passed the tall tubes in the roadway. A guard was placed on the great tank on the hill, and the public at large were forbidden to visit the spot.

And so time passed on until the six-months day had ended, the sun had sunk out of sight, and the twilight had deepened into gloom. Then suddenly bright lights were seen in all the windows of the King's palace, and there issued forth a number of men bearing lighted torches, which they applied hurriedly to the tops of the tubes that lined the roadway down into and along the principal streets of the town.

A steady light was given out by each of these gigantic candles, making the roadway and street light and cheery, while crowds of people came from all quarters to enjoy the novel spectacle.

Count Gofaster was the hero of the hour. Even the adherents of Snarlitz were silenced and forced to admit that the giant had conferred the third great benefit on the state. The King, in his own brilliantly lighted hall of audience, thanked him before the assembled nobles of the Court for the great service he had rendered.

"In due time," said the King, "every street in the town shall be lighted through this means, and if the six months of night be not bright as day, they will at least be rendered enjoyable."

It was now the opportunity of Gofaster to demand the fulfilment of the King's pledge in regard to the man who should confer three benefits on the state and obtain the favor of the Princess.

But Gofaster dared not speak. To his surprise and sorrow, he found that the manner of the Princess was not only less cordial, but shy and reserved, and that she seemed to avoid him. The young giant was not versed in the ways of womankind, and found discouragement in what should have given him hope. He had not studied the proverb, "Faint heart never won fair lady," and reflected much upon his former comparatively low condition, from which he had only been removed by the favor of the sovereign, and which did not seem to warrant a close alliance with the royal family. He became moody, and sank into a kind of hopeless gloom, under which his health suffered. His friend the Prime-minister saw this, but did not conjecture the cause; neither, apparently, did the King nor Princess.

Gofaster withdrew himself as much as possible from the royal presence, and seemed to have no friend to whom he was willing to confide his trouble. He even forgot the Phooka, but the latter

did not forget him.

As Gofaster was seated in his apartments, ruminating upon his sad fate, he heard a hollow laugh near him, which he recognized as that of his invisible guardian.

"Clearly," said the goblin, "all human beings are fools, and Count Gofaster seems to be about the biggest fool of all."

The giant did not resent the reproach, for the gratitude toward his benefactor blunted the point of it, if it did not relieve the sting.

"Possibly," he said, in reply. "But why now more than usual?"

"Clearly," answered the other, "because you are breaking your heart about the love of a young woman who is breaking hers because you do not make the proper advances. Do you expect a maiden, setting aside her high rank, to be won without wooing?"

"But I dare not," said Gofaster, despairingly.

"He who dares not is lost," said the Phooka. "I know everything that goes on through the palace, because I pass everywhere without observation. The Princess believes you indifferent to her charms, and is mortified that she has given her heart to one who treats her with neglect. The whole town is talking of it, and wondering why you do not embrace the good-fortune in store for you."

A new light broke in upon the giant's mind. "I shall try," he said.

"Try is the best dog in the pack," said the goblin.

Gofaster now plucked up courage and appeared at the audience—which was given every twenty-four hours—bravely arrayed, and with a cheerful face. He joined in conversation with the friends whom he had made among the nobles, and even ventured to address some observations to the Princess and the ladies of honor around her, the latter of whom received him with marked pleasure. Bit by bit the conversation in this group became general, and finally the Princess herself joined in it, throwing off her reserve. As the two spoke together more freely, the ladies of honor drew back, as if by tacit agreement, and the Princess and Gofaster were left together.

"I have not sufficiently congratulated you, Count," said the Princess, "on your last great achievement." [Pg 169]

"Nor have I, your Royal Highness," answered he, "thanked you for the kindly and effective words you spoke in behalf of my project when its success seemed doubtful."

"But *I* never doubted it or you," said the Princess.

"Princess Amber," said the giant. But here he stopped.

"Well, Count?" said the Princess.

"I have been fortunate enough," said he, "to render three times some service to the state, and might claim some reward for it; but there is only one reward that I desire, and that depends upon your Royal Highness."

"Name it," said the Princess. "Speak freely."

"I would be bold enough to ask your father for your hand were I sure it would meet with approval from you, but I have not had the presumption to hope."

"He who deserves," said the Princess, blushing, "does not presume," and she turned away.

Thus encouraged, Gofaster boldly preferred a request to the King that the royal pledge should be fulfilled. The King smiled good-naturedly, and saying "A King should never break his word," led him to the Princess and joined their hands. Then turning to the Court, he said: "We give our daughter a fitting mate and the kingdom an heir-presumptive on whose courage and capacity it can rely."

The lords and ladies of the Court congratulated the betrothed couple, who were shortly after wedded in great state, to the satisfaction of all.

Some weeks after the marriage, as Prince Gofaster—for he had been raised to that rank—was passing into his cabinet, he heard the hollow laugh which betokened the presence of Shon the Phooka. Turning to face the sound, he saw before him a laughing boy a little over four feet in height, who wore what seemed to be the jerkin of strength and the shoes of endurance, shrunk to his own size.

"I have resumed my property," said Shon, "because you have no further use for them, with the exception of the cap of intellect, which I leave behind for your use. So long as you have that it will give you what additional strength and endurance you require. I now leave you. My term of banishment will end in a week. If my monarch knew what service I had rendered you I should be banished again; but, fortunately, there is no stray Phooka here to tattle, and I shall keep my own counsel. Rely upon the cap of intellect, and your future, though it may be checkered by losses and crosses, will be a glorious one."

"In what way can I show my gratitude to you?" said Gofaster. "How can I let you know what I feel?"

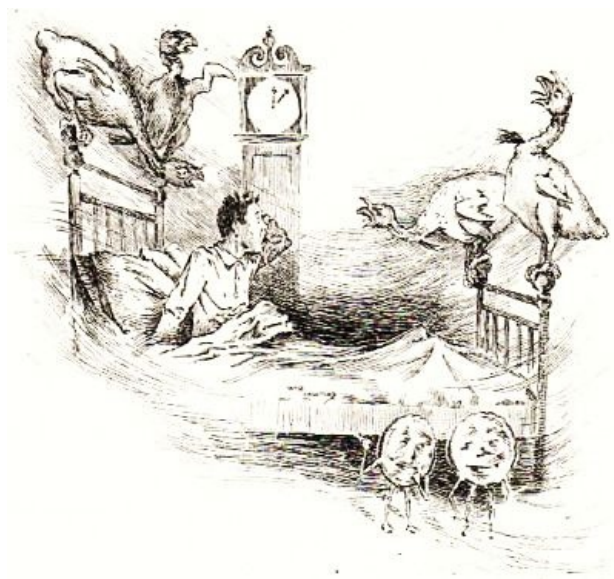
"Best," replied the goblin, "by forgetting me in course of time. As days and years go by all sense of obligation in human creatures grows less, and I doubt if you will be the sole exception to the rule." Then, with a hollow laugh, he disappeared.

The Princess Amber succeeded to the throne. How long and how wisely they ruled the kingdom, and how, when the King died, he was succeeded by his oldest son—this is all written in the chronicles of Huperborea. I should be glad to tell all about it, but I have not been able to obtain a copy of those chronicles. The Phooka has never shown himself to me, and I have not been able to get him to convey me midway beyond the barrier of ice and snow which separates Huperborea and its surrounding kingdoms from the rest of the world; and the reader must be content with what I have given him and ask for no more.

AN EXTRAVAGANT COSTUME.

There have been dandies and dudes in all ages. A hundred years ago these were known humorously as "Macaronis," and their dress was wonderful. A journal published at that time says:

"A few days ago a Macaroni made his appearance in the Assembly Rooms at Whitehaven in the following dress: A mixed silk coat, pink sattin waistcoat and breeches, covered with an elegant silver nett; white silk stockings, with pink clocks; pink sattin shoes and large pearl buckles; a mushroom-coloured stock, covered with a fine point-lace; his hair dressed remarkably high, and stuck full of pearl pins."



THE CHRISTMAS PIE.

BY MRS. DAVID MACLURE.

It was a merry Christmas Day
Not many years gone by;
A day of gifts and songs, my dear—
Description they defy;
But some especial features were
Roast turkey, nuts, and pie—
Particularly Pie!

On that bright day, not long ago,
A little friend of mine
Had had a merry time, my dear
(His age, I think, was nine);
He had a merry time, I say,
With all that cash could buy—
Especially with Pie!

He went to bed that Christmas night,
And closed his weary eye;
And what occurred thereafter, dear,
Was traceable to pie,
Though turkey had a share indeed,
Which no one can deny—
But not compared with Pie!

At midnight's still uncanny hour,

Lo! perched on each bedpost,
Appeared a long-necked turkey hen—
A pale, plucked, pimply ghost—
And sat and ogled him the while,
With wicked, leering eye,
Ejaculating "Pie!"

And there they sat through all the night,
Except that once each chime
They played at leap-frog on the bed,
And chanted all the time
A very melancholy song,
In tones pitched harsh and high:
"O give, O give me Pie!"

At early dawn my youthful friend
Sprang from his bed in flight,
To find the phantoms of his dreams
Had vanished with the night.
Said he: "Good Christmas cheer is fine,
But Wisdom's voice doth cry:
Pray draw the line at Pie!"

So, dear young friends, a word to you
Right at this Christmas Eve:
Use caution with your appetite,
Or cause may come to grieve.
Remember, *Indigestion*, dear,
Few stomachs can defy,
And draw the line at Pie.

THE MAGIC STOCKING.

[Pg 170]

A BIT OF CHRISTMAS MERRIMENT IN ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS:

SANTA CLAUS, *a jolly old elf.*
MARY, *mother's little woman, aged thirteen.*
NAN, *a stout champion of Santa Claus, aged eight.*
LUCY, *a wee darling of three years.*
TOMMY, *a scoffer at Santa Claus, aged eleven.*

TIME.—*The night before Christmas.*

Scene.—*A cosy nursery with low-turned lights and bright fire. The curtain rises, showing the children grouped around the fire, little Lucy in night-gown and tiny night-cap, cuddled with Mary in the big arm-chair. Nan is seated on a low stool, Tommy is stretched at full length on the rug. They are making preparations to hang up their stockings.*

Nan. Now let's begin at the beginning and sing it all over again.

Mary (caressingly). But Lucy is so sleepy.

Lucy (drowsily). Lucy isn't sleepy. Lucy wants to wait for Santa Claus.

Tommy (contemptuously). Santa Claus!

Mary (reproachfully). Oh, Tommy!

Nan (tying on her night-cap). You start it, Mary.

[They all sing.]

"'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that old Santa Claus soon would be there.
The children were nestled all—"

Tommy. Oh, but you know there isn't any such person as Santa Claus.

Mary (very reproachfully). Oh, Tommy!

Nan. Now, Tommy, you just stop.

Tommy. But there isn't, and you know it. It's just our fath—

Nan. Of course there's a Santa Claus.

Lucy (*sleepily*). Dear old Santa Claus! He'll come down the chimney pretty soon, won't he, Mary?

Mary. Yes, darling. You'll hear the tinkle of his jolly little sleigh-bells, and then up he'll fly with his eight tiny reindeer.

[Sings.]

"To the top of the porch, to the top of the wall,
Now dash away, dash away, dash away all.
And then in a twinkling I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head and was turning around
Down the chimney old Santa Claus came with a bound!"

Nan (*triumphantly*). There, Mr. Tommy, do you hear what it says?

Tommy. I don't care what it says. That's just a baby story. Santa Claus! Shoot Santa Claus!

Nan. You'll catch it when he does come!

Lucy (*confidently*). He's coming pretty soon, I guess.

Tommy. I ain't afraid of any Santa Claus. No reindeer could go flying over house-tops. Now, I leave it to you, could they? Deers and cows and horses and that kind of animals ain't made to fly. 'Tain't reasonable. Santa Claus! I tell you there ain't any. There never was and never will be. He's just a big, old—

Nan. Delicious, delightful—

Tommy. Deceitful, de-mol-al-iz-ing Fraud!

Lucy (*sleepily*). Dear old Santa Claus! When he comes I'll just give him a great big hug (*nodding*). I love good old Santa Claus. We love him (*dreamily*), don't we, Nannie? but Tommy says—Tommy he says—

Mary (*soothingly*). Never mind what Tommy says, darling.

[Sings softly.]

"He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work
And filled all the stockings—"

Tommy. That's a likely story!

Nan. He won't put much in your stocking, Tommy Franklin.

Mary (*softly*). 'Sh! Lucy's sound asleep, little sweetheart.

Nan. You've hung up the biggest stocking of any of us. What did you hang up your stocking for if there isn't any Santa Claus?

Tommy (*with pretended indifference*). Oh, just out of habit, I s'pose. Just 'cause I always have. And I know well enough who'll fill it. It isn't any old humbug of a Santa Claus.

[*While they have been talking and singing the children have hung their stockings in a row on the mantel. Tommy's being a conspicuously large and long one. A faint tinkle of sleigh-bells is now heard. It comes nearer and nearer, and finally stops. The children listen intently.*]

Nan (*in an excited whisper*). I believe he's come!

Mary. Oh, hark!

Tommy. I tell you, Santa Claus is a great big humbug.

[*A loud jingling of bells is heard, and a great stamping of feet at the door. Lucy wakes and rubs her eyes. Tommy tries to look unconcerned. Nan, half frightened, draws closer to Mary, and, as the last word drops from Tommy's lips, Santa Claus enters with a bound. The children make inarticulate exclamations of rapture and delight, and watch the movements of Santa Claus with wide-open eyes. Santa Claus, after depositing his pack on the floor, proceeds to the business of filling the stockings.*]

Santa Claus (*chuckling to himself*). Well, well, well! Here's a nice row of stockings—a nice row of dear children's stockings! And here are the blessed children themselves waiting patiently till I don't know what o'clock at night, just to catch a glimpse of old Santa. That's the way with the darlings. They know who loves them. They know—oh yes, yes!—they know old Santa.

Lucy (*slipping from Mary's lap and timidly approaching Santa Claus*). I love you more than a bushel, dear Santa Claus.

Santa Claus (*taking her upon his knee*). Bless her heart, of course she does. And she may sit on old Santa's knee and watch him while he fills her own cunning stocking. Here it is, the little one at the end of the row. Now let me see (*scratches his head reflectively*)—let me see. Ah, yes! here's a tiny gold ring, that shall go into the toe. And here's a little pink tea-set and a lovely, lovely dolly, and a carriage for her to ride in. That must go outside, it is such a wee stocking. I

declare, here's another dolly—a jolly sailor-boy, and a dainty box of sweets—all for the sweet baby that loves Santa Claus.

Nan (in an undertone). Now, what do you think, Mr. Tommy?

Tommy (in a loud whisper). Humbug!

Girls. For shame!

Santa Claus (putting Lucy gently back into Mary's arms). Now for the next one! Ah, yes! Here's another little ring, with a blue set, for a girl with blue eyes—

Nan (rapturously). That's me.

Santa Claus. And here goes a silver bracelet and a jolly bottle of mignonette and (*searching his pack*)—and—let me see—a copy of *Old-fashioned Girl*—

Nan. Just what I was wishing for!

Santa Claus. And a box of sweets—it won't do to forget that—and a funny puzzle for a clever little head to solve, and a mysterious package—she'll find what's in it in the morning. (*Chuckles to himself*)

Nan. Now it's yours, Mary dear.

Santa Claus (taking Mary's stocking). Now for the next one. No time to lose. This is a busy night for St. Nick. 'Way down in the very tip-toe shall go this bright little watch, to tick away the happy minutes of the New Year for mother's own little woman.

Nan. You hear that, Tommy.

Tommy. Don't you believe it.

Santa Claus. This work-basket must go outside with the books. And now for the next. Well, this is a big one.

Tommy (in an undertone). I borrowed it of cook—the longest and biggest she had.

Santa Claus (deliberately regarding Tommy's stocking). Is it possible there is a greedy child here?

Nan. Now, Tommy, aren't you ashamed of yourself.

Santa Claus (reflectively). A greedy child. I hope not, I hope not. Well, we'll see. We'll soon see (*searching his pack*). Here is a splendid pair of skates for a good boy—

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Tommy (gleefully). That's me.

Santa Claus. And here's a box of chess-men, and a— Why, upon my word! upon my word! when has this happened before? (*Santa Claus pauses in his work, showing every evidence of great astonishment, for as he undertakes to put the gifts into Tommy's stocking, they behave in a most contrary and unaccountable way. They drop to the floor, and the stocking seems to refuse to take them. Santa Claus makes several efforts to insert the gifts in the stocking, but without success.*) Well, well, I haven't had an experience like this for many a long year. What will Mrs. Santa Claus say, when I go back to the North Pole and tell her I found a contrary stocking. A contrary stocking, which means but one thing—that the child who hung it does not believe in Santa Claus. (*Sadly.*) Oh dear, what a pity! what a pity! Well, if I must, I must. (*Searches his pack.*) It is many a year since I have had any use for these things. I did hope I should never have to take them out again. (*Draws from the depth of his pack a broad leather strap, a large slipper, and other articles mentioned later. He meets with no difficulty as he drops them one by one into Tommy's big stocking.*) There! (*Thrusting in the strap.*) If he don't know the use of that, I suppose his father will have to teach him, and this (*holding up the slipper before putting it into the stocking*), no doubt his mother will know what it is for. Oh dear! oh dear! (*Shaking his head sorrowfully.*) This is too bad! too bad! It will spoil my Christmas completely. No box of goodies for this stocking— It wouldn't do—no, it wouldn't do at all. I'll have to put in this package of smarty pepper candy, to make the boy's tongue tingle that says Santa Claus is a Humbug.

Nan. What did I tell you?

Lucy. Poor Tommy.

Santa Claus. And here is a tin horn (*tries it*) without any blow in it. My good horns are for good boys to toot in my honor on Christmas day. Now a book—here is one—a nice Spelling Book, full of all the hard words that were ever invented, and not a picture in it. And here is another—a book on Good Manners—it is for the boy to study who says that Santa Claus is a Fraud.

Tommy. Boo-hoo! boo-hoo! boo-hoo! boo-hoo! I didn't mean it! Oh, I didn't mean it at all! I was just a-fooling. Boo-hoo! Oh, dear! Boo-hoo-o-o-o!

Lucy (putting her arms around his neck). Oh, poor, poor Tommy! I'll give you my nice candy. Don't cry, Tommy.

Tommy. Boo-hoo! I didn't mean it. I won't do so again. I'll stand by you forever. Indeed I will, Mr. Santa Claus, if you'll only forgive my badness. (*Tommy kneels and clasps the knees of Santa Claus imploringly.*) Oh, please forgive me, and I'll never, never doubt you again, dear, good Santa Claus!

Mary (entreatingly). Dear Santa Claus, please forgive him.

Nan. He don't deserve it, but please try him.

Lucy. Santa Claus, please love Tommy again.

Santa Claus (heartily). Well, well, well! I want to forgive him badly enough, and for your sakes I will. But, mind you this, Tommy, my lad, I must have your true allegiance from this time forth.

Tommy. Oh, good Santa Claus, I promise it truly, truly! Honor bright! Hope to die!

Santa Claus. I believe you, my lad. There, there. Give me your hand. I want to be good friends with every child in the whole happy world on the glad Christmas day. Now, we'll try again. (*He draws out the strap, etc., from Tommy's stocking, and deftly inserts in their places skates, books, etc.*) Ah, the magic stocking opens to receive gifts for a loyal child. Here go the skates, and the boys' own *Swiss Family Robinson*. (*Searches his pack.*) Aha, this tool-chest evidently belongs here, and this big horn, with a jolly toot in it (*tries it*), and, ah, yes, a whole menagerie of candy pigs and elephants and monkeys, and not a pepper drop in the lot. (*Tommy looks on in delight, and the children hug each other gleefully.*) Now, bless your sweet hearts, I must be going. Here I am, delaying as if there were not hundreds of stockings to be filled before daylight. (*Kisses little Lucy.*) Good-night, my precious one. Good-night, my darlings, and a merry, merry Christmas to you all!

[Santa Claus *gathers up his pack, straps it upon his shoulders, and departs.*]

[Song, with soft accompaniment of sleigh-bells.]

Hurrah for the merry Christmas-time,
And the jolly Christmas cheer,
And the reindeer sleigh when it comes this way,
And brings old Santa Claus dear.
Hurrah and hurrah!

For the merry Christmas-time, and the happy Christmas cheer!

Hurrah and hurrah!
For our Santa Claus so dear!

[Softly.]

Hurrah and hurrah!
For the merry Christmas-time, and the happy Christmas cheer!

Hurrah and hurrah!
For our Santa Claus so dear!

CURTAIN.

THE IMP OF THE TELEPHONE.

BY JOHN KENDRICK BANGS.

VII.—THE POETRY BOOK, AND THE END.

The Imp then arranged the wires so that the Poetry Book could recite itself to Jimmieboy, after which he went back to his office to see who it was that had been ringing the bell.

"My first poem," said a soft silvery voice from the top shelf, towards which Jimmieboy immediately directed his attention—"my first poem is a perfect gem. I have never seen anything anywhere that could by any possibility be finer than it is, unless it be in my new book, which contains millions of better ones. It is called, 'To a Street Lamp,' and goes this way:

"You seem quite plain, old Lamp, to men,
Yet 'twould be hard to say
What we should do without you when
Night follows on the day;

"And while your lumination seems
Much less than that of sun,
I truly think but for your beams
We would be much undone.

"And who knows, Lamp, but to some wight,
Too small for me to see,
You are just such a wondrous sight
As old Sol is to me!"

"Isn't that simply lovely?" said the soft silvery voice when the poem was completed.

"Yes; but I don't think it's very funny," said Jimmieboy. "I like to laugh, you know, and I couldn't laugh at that."

"Oh!" said the silvery voice, with a slight tinge of disappointment in it. "You want fun, do you?"

Well, how do you like this? I think it is the funniest thing ever written, except others by the same author:

"There was an old man in New York
Who thought he'd been changed to a stork;
He stood on one limb
'Til his eyesight grew dim,
And used his left foot for a fork."

"That's the kind," said Jimmieboy, enthusiastically. "I could listen to a million of that sort of poems."

"I'd be very glad to tell you a million of them," returned the voice, "but I don't believe there's electricity enough for me to do it under twenty-five minutes, and as we only have five left, I'm going to recite my lines on 'A Sulphur Match.'"

"The flame you make, O Sulphur Match!
When your big head I chance to scratch,

"Appears so small most people deem
You lilliputian, as you seem.

"And yet the force that in you lies
Can fight with brilliance all the skies.

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"There's strength enough in you to send
Great cities burning to their end;

"So that we have a hint in you
Of what the smallest thing can do."

"Don't you like that?" queried the voice, anxiously. "I do hope you do, because I am especially proud of that. The word lilliputian is a tremendous word for a poet of my size, and to think that I was able, alone and unassisted, to lift it bodily out of the vocabulary into the poem makes me feel very, very proud of myself, and agree with my mother that I am the greatest poet that ever lived."

"Well, if you want me to, I'll like it," said Jimmieboy, who was in an accommodating mood. "I'll take your word for it that it is a tremendous poem, but if you think of repeating it over again to me, don't do it. Let me have another comic poem."

"All right," said Pixyweevil—for it was he that spoke through the book. "You are very kind to like my poem just to please me. Tell me anything in the world you want a poem about, and I'll let you have the poem."

"Really?" cried Jimmieboy, delighted to meet with so talented a person as Pixyweevil. "Well—let me see—I'd like a poem about my garden rake."

"Certainly. Here it is:

"I had a little garden rake
With seven handsome teeth,
It followed me o'er fern and brake,
O'er meadow-land and heath.

"And though at it I'd often scowl,
And treat it far from right,
My garden rake would never growl,
Nor use its teeth to bite."

"Elegant!" ejaculated Jimmieboy. "Say it again."

"Oh no! we haven't time for that. Besides, I've forgotten it. What else shall I recite about?" queried Pixyweevil.

"I don't know; I can't make up my mind," said Jimmieboy.

"Oh dear me! that's awful easy," returned Pixyweevil. "I can do that with my eyes shut. Here she goes:

"Shall I become a lawyer great,
A captain of a yacht,
A man who deals in real estate,
A doctor, or a what?
Ah me! Oh ho!
I do not know.
I can't make up my mind.

"I have a penny. Shall I buy
An apple or a tart?
A bit of toffee or a pie,
A cat-boat or a cart?
Ah me! Oh ho!
I do not know.

I can't make up my mind."

"Splendid!" cried Jimmieboy.

"That's harder—much harder," said Pixyweevil, "but I'll try. How is this:

"I bought one day, in Winnipeg,
A truly wondrous heavy egg;
And when my homeward course was run
I showed it to my little son.
'Dear me!' said he,
When he did see,
'I think that hen did
Splendid-ly!'

"I saw a bird—'twas reddish-brown—
One day while in a country town,
Which sang, 'Oh, Johnny, Get Your Gun';
And when I told my little son,
In tones of glee
Said he, 'Dear me!
I think that wren did
Splendid-ly!'"

"That's the best I can do with splendid," said Pixyweevil.

"Well, it's all you can do now, anyhow," came a voice from the doorway, which Jimmieboy immediately recognized as the Imp's; "for Jimmieboy's mamma has just telephoned that she wants him to come home right away."

"It was very nice, Mr. Pixyweevil," said Jimmieboy, as he rose to depart. "And I am very much obliged."

"Thank you," returned Pixyweevil. "You are very polite, and exceedingly truthful. I believe myself that, as that 'Splendid' poem might say, if it had time,

"I've truly ended
Splendid-ly."

And then Jimmieboy and the Imp passed out of the library back through the music and cookery room. The Imp unlocked the door, and, fixing the wires, sent Jimmieboy sliding down to the back hall, whence he had originally entered the little telephone closet.

"Hullo!" said his papa. "Where have you been?"

"Having a good time," said Jimmieboy.

"And what have you done with the key of my cigar-box?"

"Oh, I forgot," said Jimmieboy. "I left it in the telephone door."

"What a queer place to leave it," said his papa. "Let me have it, please, for I want to smoke."

And Jimmieboy went to get it, and, sure enough, there it was in the little box, and it unlocked it, too; but when his father came to open the door and look inside, the Imp had disappeared.

THE END.



"HULLO!" SAID HIS PAPA. "WHERE
HAVE YOU BEEN?"

INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORT

The final game of the Long Island League was played on Thanksgiving day at Eastern Park, between Poly Prep, and the Brooklyn High-School. Although Pratt Institute had won the League championship, and both the contesting elevens had been defeated by St. Paul's, the interest taken by Brooklyn football enthusiasts in the rivalry of these two teams was sufficient to draw a larger crowd to Eastern Park than has been seen there at a football game since Yale played Princeton in 1890. Over 7000 people paid admission to witness this interscholastic contest. The game resulted in a victory for the High-School—16-12. The defensive work of both teams was weak, and when once one of the elevens secured the ball, they were pretty sure of carrying it down the field for a touch-down, unless they lost it on a fumble. The cause for this weakness in defensive play is no doubt due to the fact that it is the hardest kind of work to get a scrub team for the first eleven of either school to practise against. St. Paul's is about the only school in the Long Island League that can boast of a regularly organized second eleven. At the other schools no one seems to care about going on the field unless he is reasonably sure of securing a position on the first team.

In the first half, High-School scored ten points and Poly Prep. six. The work of both teams in this half was of about an even order; neither kicked, apparently feeling that the only hope for success was to cling to the possession of the ball. This was a mistake on Poly Prep.'s part, for in Mason, their full-back, they have a punter whose superior is not to be found on any school team of the Long Island League. In the second half, Poly Prep. took a brace, and although High-School scored again, they never gave up hope of success. The Prep. team scored chiefly because of the plunges through the line of Mason and Bresze, who carried the ball for repeated gains through tackle and guard, while Richards went around the end a number of times. These men did the best offensive work of the day for their side. Robeson at quarter did well, and seemed to have gotten rid of that nervousness which characterized his play earlier in the season. His passing was clean and accurate, and he used good generalship in giving signals. Bresze's tackling was low and hard, and at breaking up interference he proved himself most valuable. The best defence was put up by Boorum at centre, and by Norton and Hoover, his guards. Only one gain was made through them.



**BERKELEY VS. PRATT.
Full-back "bucking" the line.**

For the High-School, Laner, the Captain, and Lambert did the best work. The latter's offence was strong, and his good runs around the ends were in a large measure responsible for High-School's victory. This team was strong at the ends and back of the line, in this having some advantage over their opponents. In no game that I have seen this season has there been so little kicking; High-School did not kick at all, and Poly Prep. only once. This was when Mason punted for a 35-yard gain into High-School territory, Laner missing the catch, and letting the ball go to Poly Prep. on the 30-yard line. This should have encouraged the Poly Prep. Captain to play more of a kicking game, but he was apparently blind to his advantage. Both elevens were weak at tackle, and most of the plays were shoved through here on both sides.



**BERKELEY VS. ST. PAUL'S.
Holding in the rush-line.**

The Long Island football season has not been so successful this year as might have been desired. It made a bad start and ended up weakly. Bryant and Stratton's decided at the beginning of the season not to put a team in the field. Adelphi, after being defeated 66-0 by Pratt Institute, disbanded her eleven, and forfeited the remaining games scheduled. A little later the Latin School followed suit. The latter had played but one game with High-School, in which they did good work, although the score was 18-0 against them. This wholesale resignation left only four teams in the League: St. Paul's, Pratt Institute, Poly Prep., and High-School. The reason given by Bryant and Stratton's for withdrawing from the League was that so little interest was taken in football that it was impossible to organize an eleven. I think the additional reason of bad

management on the part of the Athletic Committee might well be added to this. At Adelphi one player was hurt early in the season, whereupon the parents of five of the best players in school took it upon themselves to prohibit their sons from taking any further part in the game. Another reason given by the Adelphians is that their men were so light that it was useless to attempt to pit them against the heavier teams of the League.

The Latin School eleven was unfortunate in having some of its best players laid up at the start. This seemed to discourage the men, and some of them announced openly that they intended to play Poly Prep., but would forfeit to St. Paul's and Pratt Institute, because they were not heavy enough to play against such teams. Later in the season they did, in fact, play Poly Prep., and were defeated 20-10. This business of forfeiting games for one reason or another is a very bad thing. The League ought to have some rule to penalize such conduct, or every season will see the same kind of fizzle that this year has exhibited. Any team that feels it cannot win in Brooklyn decides apparently that the noblest course of action is to forfeit at once. This is not sportsmanlike, and very little thought on the part of athletic leaders across the river ought to show them what a serious mistake they make by encouraging or allowing any such conduct on the part of the Captains or Managers of football teams.

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**BERKELEY VS. ST. PAUL'S.
Formation for tandem play.**

When the season opened, St. Paul's School was looked upon as a probable winner of the championship, but after the eleven had played several games it became apparent that the men lost heart in an uphill contest. In the game against Berkeley, however, they belied this reputation by playing a beautiful uphill game. High-School and Poly Prep. are now tied for third place, in spite of the fact that the former was victorious in the Thanksgiving-day game. The League will undoubtedly give to the Latin School the game that her eleven played against the High-School, which the latter won 18-0, and in which there was that peculiar agreement between the Captains to which I referred some weeks ago.

The results of the games played in the Long Island Interscholastic Football League this fall, are as follows:

Pratt Institute, 18—High-School, 0.
Pratt Institute, 66—Adelphi, 0.
Pratt Institute, 26—St. Paul's, 0.
Pratt Institute, 24—Poly Prep., 4.
St. Paul's, 36—Poly Prep., 0.
St. Paul's, 18—High-School, 0.
High-School, 18—Latin School, 0.
High-School, 16—Poly Prep., 12.
Poly Prep., 20—Latin School, 10.

Adelphi forfeited to all except Pratt Institute; and Bryant and Stratton's forfeited to everybody. The Latin School forfeited to Pratt Institute and to St. Paul's. Poly Prep. was the only team to score against Pratt Institute.

Matters of importance have been occupying the New York Inter-scholastic Athletic Association's attention for the past two weeks. These matters are of importance not only to students of the New York schools immediately interested in the questions in dispute, but also to all readers of this Department who favor cleanliness and honesty in school sport. Space will not allow me to go very fully into the questions that came up for decision at the two meetings of the N.Y.I.S.A.A., recently held here and fully discussed in the daily papers; but I shall try to touch broadly enough upon the principles involved to make the resulting lesson of service even to those who may not be familiar with the details of the two cases. The N.Y.I.S.A.A. this fall found that it had two difficult matters to settle. One of them was a charge brought by the rector of Trinity School against the head-master of Barnard School, accusing him of calling upon and personally asking a member of Trinity School to leave that institution and to accept a free scholarship at Barnard. The purpose of this inducement was said to be that Barnard wished thus to add to the strength of her football team. At the meeting of the committee intrusted with the task of deciding whether or no these charges were justified, Barnard School was represented by a lawyer, two teachers, and a stenographer, and doubtless with a very strong defense, because the committee after a protracted session decided to dismiss the complaint. The second question that the Arbitration Committee had to pass upon was the protest against Ehrich, of Harvard School, filed last spring by De La Salle.

The Ehrich matter is already familiar to readers of this Department, for I touched upon it at the time the protest was made in June. It will be remembered that in the game for the championship of the New York League in baseball, Ehrich caught for Harvard in spite of the fact that De La Salle claimed he had no right to play, having been a student at the College of the City of New

York. Harvard School won that game, and as a result the pennant was subsequently awarded to them. At the recent meeting of the Arbitration Committee to decide the question of fraud on the part of Harvard, this school claimed that the association had already legally awarded the championship, and that therefore no further action could be taken. De La Salle, on the other hand, contended that they had protested Ehrich before the final game of last year, and showed that he was ineligible to the Harvard team because of having been enrolled the previous autumn in the Freshman class of a college.

According to the constitution of the N.Y.I.S.A.A. any violation of the rules is fraud. There is a rule which says that no one having attended a college may thereafter play upon a school team. De La Salle therefore charged Harvard School with being guilty of fraud, and tried to have the question settled last spring. Three attempts were made to have the protest decided. The first time there was no quorum present; at the second meeting the Condon delegates left the room, refusing to pass on any question of fraud; at the third meeting, on June 19th, the championship was awarded to the Harvard School; but from all I hear, the voting was carried on in a most questionable and peculiar manner. I hope there is no truth in the report that clerks from the drug-store located in the building were brought in as delegates, to make a quorum, and voted as such.

When the question came up before the Arbitration Committee last week, De La Salle claimed that, according to the constitution, charges of fraud must be referred not to the Executive Committee of the I.S.A.A., but to an Arbitration Committee, which is an entirely different body. De La Salle also asserted that their delegates had never been notified of the meeting at which the championship was awarded, and that even had they been notified they could not have been present because their school closed a week before. After a long debate Harvard School was found guilty by the Arbitration Committee of violating the constitution and, consequently, guilty of fraud.

The penalty for fraud is expulsion from the Association. Harvard now cries that it has been unfairly treated, and the principal of the school has stated in the newspapers that he will withdraw his school from the Association. This, of course, he cannot do, because Harvard has charges pending against her, and under these conditions resignation is out of the question. The action of the Arbitration Committee in thus stamping out the least semblance of professionalism in the Association cannot be too highly commended. Last year the N.Y.I.S.A.A. was run almost entirely by a few schools, and there was a great howl against "ring politics" from certain quarters. The outsiders formed themselves into a "reform party," and early this fall selected the men they chose to have represent them in the Executive Committee of the Association, nominated these men, and elected the entire ticket. It is to be hoped that this "reform party" will stick to its determination to keep scholastic athletics in New York clean and honest, and absolutely free from even the slightest rumor or suspicion of professional tendencies.

If the managers of New York school athletics cannot do this, if they cannot keep the professional spirit out of sport, they had better disband their elevens and their nines, rather than make sport a farce and a masquerade for dishonesty. A commendable step in the "house-cleaning" now going forward is the revision of the constitution.

The most interesting, most scientific, and most important game of the Boston season was that played Thanksgiving morning between Boston Latin and English High Schools, before three thousand spectators. English High pulled out the game, and thus won the championship with a clean score of victories. The Latin School played desperately, realizing that to win the game meant to tie English High for the championship.

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After an exchange of kicks at the start, English High took the ball at the centre of the field, and worked it over the line for the only score of the game, without losing it. It was brilliant, hard, irresistible playing that did it, and it won the game. It was the best football that has been seen in the League this season. The only thing to be compared to it is the game that Boston Latin played from that moment until time was called. Latin forced the playing, after that fatal touch-down, until the end. English High was on the defence throughout. But that defence was so good that Latin, with an attack far better than it has ever shown before, was unable to score. Three or four times Latin carried the ball to the five-yard line of their opponents, only to be held for downs, and see the ball kicked safely down the field. The play on both sides was of the surest and most satisfactory order. There were no flukes to regret, no incompetent officials to turn the result of the game.

There was almost no fumbling or poor tackling. Every five yards that was gained was earned by straight, hard-played football. Every time four downs were called it was because of superior defence. The football that was played in this game would be a credit to any college team, and many a 'varsity player could learn a lesson of sand from these boys.

Whittemore of the English High-School, and Maguire of the Latin, were stars even in this group. Each one played football every minute of the game. In offence or defence, not an error was made by either. Not far behind them comes Callahan, English High's centre. In spite of two recently sprained ankles, he played a most aggressive game, repeatedly getting out and stopping end and tackle plays. It was his hole-making, too, in this game, as heretofore, that made Ellsworth such a brilliant line-bucker. Besides Callahan and Whittemore, Ashley and Eaton were most valuable to English High. Ashley got around the end in a way that must have surprised him. As a ground-gainer, Eaton, the guard, was not as successful as usual, but he did an immense amount of work on defence. Purtell, his side partner, played a steady, sure game.

For the Latin school, Maguire's work was far ahead of any one's else. He was their surest ground-gainer and their surest tackler. McLachlan, who is the tallest man in the League, played the best

end in the game. He is a hard man to put out, and is a great interferer. Daly, at quarter, had a brainy day, and ran the team faultlessly. Nagle, at guard, quit even with Eaton, and time and again helped Teevens, the full-back, through the line.

Man for man, the teams were evenly matched. In the matter of sand neither side can claim any superiority. English High can rest assured that the championship was never more gloriously won. Boston Latin need feel no chagrin because their opponents played a game just one whit better than their own.

Two other great games were played Thanksgiving morning, one between Cambridge Manual and Cambridge High and Latin, the other between Boston English High and Boston Latin. The first-named game was played on a soggy, slippery field, which did not allow of much good football. It was intensely interesting and exciting, however, and resulted in a tie. In the first half it looked like High-School's game; but in the second Manual had everything her own way. It would be unfair to say that it was a poor exhibition in so far as playing football was concerned, for the miserable field was responsible for that. The backs never got started well, and the punters could not stand firmly enough to do good kicking, and anything but the most elementary plays was impossible.

High and Latin had a much better defence than Manual; there was but one weak spot in the line, but that—left tackle—was worked repeatedly for big gains. Cambridge played a new man at left end, Warnock, and he gives promise of doing great work next year. Warren, at guard, and Saul, at quarter, played their usual reliable defence, and Beardsell, at end, played a most brilliant game. He followed the ball wonderfully. Nine times out of ten, when the ball was fumbled, it was Beardsell who fell on it. For Manual, Moore, at centre, played the most aggressive game. White excelled among the backs, keeping his feet remarkably well in the mud.

This game was to decide which team would finish last in the race; but it failed to do so, as each of these schools now has four defeats and one tie on its record. The question of last place must be decided, however, in order to give Somerville High, who won the junior championship, a chance to enter the senior league next year.

THE GRADUATE.

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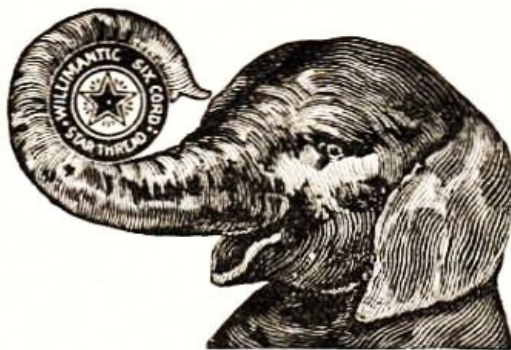
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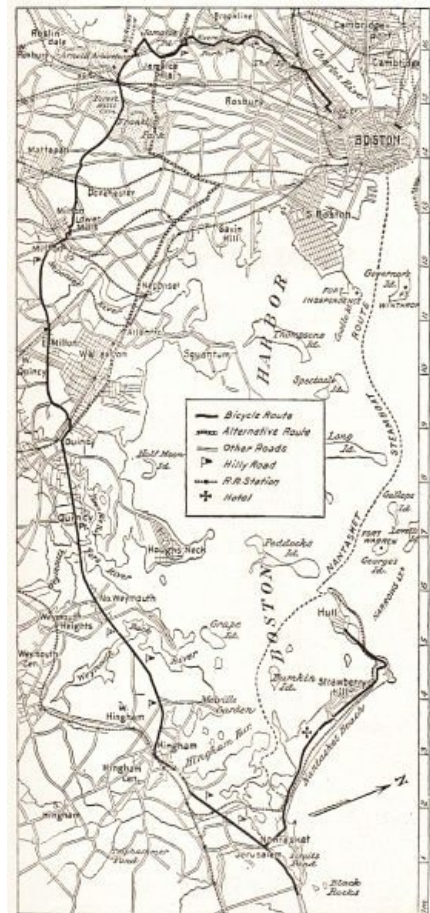
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The Editor will be pleased to answer any question on the subject. Our maps and tours contain much valuable data kindly supplied from the official maps and road-books of the League of American Wheelmen. Recognizing the value of the work being done by the L. A. W. the Editor will be pleased to furnish subscribers with membership blanks and information so far as possible.

The excellent roads and pleasant mingling of inland and coast scenery make the cycling trip to Nantasket and the shore one of the most enjoyable in the vicinity of Boston. The rendezvous is at Copley Square in front of the new Public Library. Start northward through Dartmouth Street, turn to the left onto Commonwealth Avenue, a finely macadamized street, and follow the same until you reach Charlesgate Street, West; here bear to the left, and cross the bridge over the Boston and Albany tracks; this will bring the rider into the Fenway Parks, a part of the great Metropolitan Park System. After leaving the bridge at the first fork of the roads keep to the right, and shortly afterward to the right again, thus following the main Boulevard to Brookline Avenue. There turn to the left, and in a few rods to the right again. For some distance after passing this point there are a few easy hills and moderate coasts, the road winding in and out between picturesque hills and through beautiful woodlands.

On coming in sight of Jamaica Pond turn to the left, and take the next road to the right, passing the pond on the right hand, and taking the main driveway in Jamaica Park. At this last turn, the rider passes on the right a building so peculiar as to attract more than usual attention; it is the Holland House, which was bought after the close of the exposition in Chicago, and transported to its present site. After passing the small pond on the left of Pond Street turn to the left, and at the first fork of the roads keep to the left, and take the next road to the right, which runs along the northern boundary of the Arnold Arboretum (place of trees) with the Adams Nervine Asylum and Agricultural College on the right. Keep now to the direct road, which winds a little, crosses the tracks of the New York and New Haven Railroad, and skirts Franklin Park on the south, bearing here the name of Morton Street.

From the beginning of our ride up to the end of Franklin



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Park all the roadway is of the best macadamized construction with smooth and perfectly preserved surface. The rider gets a comprehensive view of the Fenway Parks, Jamaica Park, and a glimpse of the Arnold Arboretum, and Franklin Park, immediately to the south of which is Forest Hills Cemetery, with the Blue Hills of Milton in the distance.

On leaving Franklin Park keep the direct road on Morton Street to Milton Lower Mills. On reaching Sanford Street turn to the left, and at the next corner to the right, past the Library Building; then bear to the left on to Dorchester Avenue and across the bridge over Neponset River, by the Milton Station on Adams Street, which we follow directly to East Milton Station.

Just after leaving the river there is a stiff climb up Milton Hill, at the summit of which there is a fine panoramic view of the country through which we have passed, and of the region through which we are to ride. We now have a good dirt road with some clay here and there, with down grade and excellent coasts. Keep on Adams Street into Quincy, with a sharp turn to the right after crossing the tracks of the Old Colony Railroad, which brings us to Hancock Street, and there we turn to the left at Washington Street, and follow the street railway track over Quincy Point across the bridge into North Weymouth. Follow Bridge Street, keep to the left at fountain into North Weymouth village, and then to the left by Weymouth draw-bridge to Hingham. Bear to the left at Hingham Station, crossing the bridge past the boat-house, and follow Summer Street, which joins Rockland Street, a direct way to Nantasket, where at the Post-office the road branches. The road to the left from the Post-office takes one to Nantasket Beach. Distance of round trip forty-nine miles.



Any questions in regard to photograph matters will be willingly answered by the Editor of this column, and we should be glad to hear from any of our club who can make helpful suggestions.

PAPERS FOR BEGINNERS, No. 17.

INDEXING AND STORING NEGATIVES.

To save time, trouble, and vexation of spirit one should have his negatives in such order that he can put his hand on the very one he wants at a minute's notice, and unless one forms the habit of indexing and storing his negatives as fast as they are made, his photographic affairs are sure to get into a hopeless tangle.

The easiest and most convenient way which the editor has found for storing negatives is to have a cupboard partitioned off into pigeon-holes large enough to hold 25 negatives each. The pigeon-holes should be 3½ inches in width and 6 inches in height, in which can be conveniently stored 25 4x5 or 5x8 negatives. The negatives are first placed in strong manila envelopes which can be bought of any dealer in photographic supplies at from 25c. to 35c. a 100, according to size. These envelopes are marked on the outside—No. —, Name —, Notes —. Place the negative in the envelope, and in the proper places write the name and number of the picture, and under the heading "Notes" write anything about the picture which you wish to remember in regard to the making, printing, etc., and also the date of taking. Copy the numbers and names of the pictures in a blank-book which will be the negative catalogue. Write nothing in the book but the numbers and names of the negatives. All notes should be made on the envelope containing the negative.

On the edge of each pigeon-hole should be marked the number of negatives which it contains, thus: "1 to 25," "26 to 50," "51 to 75," etc. Such a method of storing one's negatives makes the finding of any one an easy matter.

Some amateurs classify their negatives, putting landscapes, interiors, groups, etc., by themselves, but it is really more simple to number and name them in the order in which they are made, and make a supplementary classified list. Have the general list, and then, as one makes a landscape and wishes to have the names of the landscapes, add it to the classified list in this way: Landscapes—View on Hudson, No. 11. Mall, Central Park, No. 14. A Mountain Road, No. 23, or whatever name and number the negatives may be which comprise your landscapes. Place the figure studies by themselves in a classified list, but make the general list as directed. One remembers almost by instinct the number of a negative he has once placed in his collection.

If one has not a convenient cupboard a wooden soap box fitted with pigeon-holes, which can be done by any ingenious boy or girl, answers every purpose. The box should be fastened to the wall, a tape tied to the negative catalogue, and the tape fastened to the side of the box; then the two will never become separated.

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living in Washington to exchange a view of the Capitol for one of the Parliament buildings with him, or, if preferred, will send any view round Ottawa. He also asks if the editor would advise the use of combined bath with solio paper. The combined bath is generally preferred, and if used according to directions the results are very satisfactory.

ILL-TEMPERED BABIES

are not desirable in any home. Insufficient nourishment produces ill temper. Guard against fretful children by feeding nutritious and digestible food. The Gail Borden Eagle Brand Condensed Milk is the most successful of all infant foods.—[Adv.]

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F. E. THORP, Norwich, N. Y.



This Department is conducted in the interest of Girls and Young Women, and the Editor will be pleased to answer any question on the subject so far as possible. Correspondents should address Editor.

I am so pleased, Katharine and Eleanor, to hear that you are going away on a week's visit—one to the city, and one to the country—and that you are both anticipating a very pleasant time. The date, I understand, is not yet absolutely fixed, but the visit is to be made before long, and you would like to know what to take with you in the way of clothes, and to have all the hints I can give about making such a visit successfully.

Well, we will begin at the beginning. When the note of invitation from your friend arrives, the first thing to do is to answer it, setting the day and the train when she may expect you. She probably mentioned the first in her invitation, and inclosed a time-table so that you might select your train. Having decided on this, keep your engagement. Do not allow a slight inconvenience, or an invitation elsewhere, or a caprice, to let you change your plan. Go when you are expected, and stay as long as you are asked to stay. An invitation usually mentions whether your friend would like you to come for a week, or ten days, or a fortnight, or it may read thus: "Please give us the great pleasure of a visit from you. Come on Friday afternoon and stay until Tuesday," or on "Monday, and help us celebrate Louise's birthday, which occurs on Tuesday; we will hope to keep you with us until Friday." It is very much pleasanter to know for how long you are invited than to have it left uncertain; but when no time is mentioned, one takes it for granted that a week will cover the period of the visit.

By all means, when you can do this easily, take a small trunk for your wardrobe for a week. If not a trunk, then take a large dress-suit case, or one of those handy bags called telescopes, which may be stretched out or compressed as occasion demands. You must not forget that in some places expressage is difficult, though this is probably not the case in any town or village near a railroad. There are localities in our country where luggage is difficult of transportation, and trunks have to wait on the chance of a neighborly lift, but this is understood by those who travel there, and they arrange accordingly. A small trunk gives a girl a chance to carry several pretty waists and skirts, and to dress with greater variety while at her friend's house. But one may pack a great many things in her brother's suit-case.

A girl will find her pretty travelling dress, which at this season is of rough cloth, dark brown or blue by preference, with a thick jacket and a neat little hat, suitable for walking, driving, and sight-seeing while away from home. She must be sure that her boots and gloves are in dainty order, without missing buttons, and, if she chooses, a fur collar or boa and a muff may complete her out-door costume. For use in company, afternoon teas, evenings, little gatherings of friends at dinner, or any fête to which she is invited, a pretty waist of silk or chiffon and a skirt of silk or fine wool will be appropriate. In packing waists use plenty of soft white tissue-paper, so that they will come out uninjured at the journey's end. Your mother will provide you with a simple evening gown, if she thinks it needful, and a girl never looks sweeter than in simple white muslin or in a white gown of some sort. With the white gown must be white shoes, and house gowns of all kinds need dainty foot-gear.

Now, pray forgive me, but when going on a visit never omit your night-gowns, changes of underclothing, stockings and handkerchiefs in abundance. A lady is never unprovided with enough of these essentials. Take your own comb and brush, your tooth-powder, tooth-brush, cold cream, and all the little toilet accessories which you like to have at home. Supply yourself with pins, the common kind and the sheath kind, and have your needle and thread in case of a rent to be mended. Also carry note-paper, stamps, and envelopes, so that you may write to the home people often.

Margaret E. Sangster.

An Appeal for a School-house.

Come, dear readers of the Table—Ladies, Knights, Patrons, and their friends—let us make possible the laying of the corner-stone of Good Will School next spring. The task is not a difficult one. It can be accomplished in this way:

Get one subscriber to HARPER'S ROUND TABLE. Remit the \$2 for it for one year. Attach the accompanying Coupon. Say in your letter that you wish the 50 cents turned into the Fund. And the thing is done. The Fund is complete. The corner-stone will be laid. The boys will have an industrial school-house. The Order will have performed a grand, a chivalrous deed.

At this holiday-time every person who reads these lines has it within his or her power to build this school-house. Because, if *you* get the one subscriber, the house will be built. If you do not, it will not—not now. All depends on you.

Go out and ask your friends about it. Ask them to help you get the subscriber. Your parents and teachers will help you. Ask them to do so. Set your heart on getting this one subscriber. Go to a Sunday-school or church committee, a day school, some well-to-do man or woman who has young persons in the household. Ask the well-to-do neighbor. Relate the merits of the paper, and show a sample copy and Prospectus. We furnish them free. Ask us to do so.

But do more than this. Relate the story of Good Will. Tell the person whom you are asking to subscribe why you want the subscription, and why you want it now. Tell him or her that Good Will Farm, while in Maine, takes boys from any part of the country, and is therefore not a local, but a national enterprise. Say that it is a house for an industrial school that the Order is to build. The Farm is in good hands, and the school itself will be well conducted. Our task is only to put up the building, not to conduct the school. Say that during the last few years—two or three—more than 700 poor boys have applied for admission to Good Will, and had to be refused it for lack of room. These boys were deserving. Say further that if you get the subscription the school will be built, and, by turning a house now used for the school into a dwelling, more boys can be taken—boys of five, six, and seven years of age, who are now homeless, may be given homes, school advantages, and a chance to become useful Christian men.

During the next two weeks will *you* get this subscription? Talk it up—and get it. The appeal is not made to the Order. It is made to *you*. If you do not wish to cut out the coupon, make a pen one nearly like it, ask us for duplicates, or send on the subscription without a coupon, simply saying that you got it to help the school, and that you want 50 cents of the \$2 given to the Fund. Be sure to give the subscription address, and your own name for the Honor Roll.

Come on, dear friends, let us build this school-house.

THIS COUPON

Will be received by the publishers of HARPER'S ROUND TABLE as



when accompanied by an order for a NEW subscription to HARPER'S ROUND TABLE and One Dollar and Fifty Cents. The intent of this Coupon is to pay you for inducing another person, *not now a subscriber*, to subscribe for HARPER'S ROUND TABLE for one year. This Coupon has nothing whatever to do with your own subscription; that is, with the copy you expect to read next year, it matters not in whose name it be ordered, and will not be accepted as payment for any part of it. It is good for its face in the hands of any person who performs the work indicated, whether said person is a subscriber or not. HARPER & BROTHERS.

More about Garter-snakes.

Some weeks ago I noticed an inquiry by Vincent V. M. Beede whether or not there is a distinct variety of garter-snake living near or in the water. In reply to this I will say that I think there is. Last spring when trying to catch some tadpoles in a small pond, I saw a large snake swim towards me. Like Sir Vincent, I at first took it to be a water-adder, but on looking at it a second time I saw that it was a large, dull-colored garter-snake. A few days after I was at another pool in the woods and saw at the edge of the water a similar snake, which was wriggling about in a peculiar way. I watched it closely, and saw that it was catching and swallowing tadpoles.

From these observations I am inclined to think that there is a separate variety of garter-snake. Both snakes were very large and less brilliantly striped than any I had seen before. Can any one tell me more on the subject? I should like to see and talk with Sir Vincent. Does he attend the E. O. High-school? I would like some correspondents.

EVELYN G. MITCHELL, R.T.F.
EAST ORANGE.

Sir Vincent, who is one of our most popular Table contributors, attends the Centenary Institute at Hackettstown.

A Pretty Experiment.

The natural colors of a leaf may be easily transferred to paper. Take a leaf of a tree or

shrub, place over it a small piece of white linen soaked in spirits of nitre, and insert between the leaves of a heavy book with a sheet of paper to receive the impression. Lay the book aside for a few days. The leaf will be found devoid of color, which will have been transferred to the paper in all the original beauty of tint and outline of leaf.

WILBUR E. CLAYBERGER, R.T.K.

Another Virgil Version.

In the ROUND TABLE for October 29th Sir Knight Alfred G. Baker asked about a line from Virgil, "The Poles Resound." The ancients believed that the earth was flat, and that the sky revolved round it. On one side of the sky was the north star, and on the other another star. Therefore the line is translated by, "The sky," not the earth, "resounds with heavy thunders."

C. F. WHEELER.



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This Department is conducted in the interest of stamp and coin collectors, and the Editor will be pleased to answer any question on these subjects so far as possible. Correspondents should address Editor Stamp Department.

So many inquiries come to me regarding value of coins, that I shall give lists of the prices *asked by dealers* for U. S. coins. These lists will not be reprinted. Collectors will therefore preserve the Numbers containing the same. The prices as quoted are for coins in "fair" condition. For coins in "good," "very good," "fine," and "very fine" condition much larger prices are asked. To begin with the lowest.

HALF-CENTS.—1796, \$12; 1797, lettered edge 1802, \$2.50 each; 1793, 1795 lettered edge, \$1.50 each; all the others from 10c. to 50c. each.

CENTS.—1787, two varieties, 20c., 50c.; 1793, six varieties, \$3.50, \$5, \$8, and upward; 1794, 50c.; 1795, two varieties, 50c., \$1; 1796, three varieties, 50c., 75c., \$2; 1797, four varieties, 25c., 50c., 75c., \$1; 1799 over 98, \$7.50; 1799, perfect date, \$10; 1801, United, \$1; 1804, \$4; 1809, \$1; 1839 over 36, \$3; 1851 over 81, \$2; the balance from 5c. to 75c. each, mostly 5c.

SMALL CENTS.—1856, flying eagle, \$4. All the others, 5c. or 10c. each.

TWO CENTS.—1873, \$1.75. All the others 10c. each.

THREE CENTS (NICKEL).—1877, proofs only, \$2.50. All the others 10c. or 15c.

FIVE CENTS (NICKEL).—1877, proofs only, \$2.50. All the others 10c. or 15c.

THREE CENTS (SILVER)—From 1863 to 1873 inclusive, 75c. to \$1 each. All the others 10c. each.

FIVE CENTS (SILVER).—1802, \$250; 1805, \$7.50; 1860, no arrow, \$5; 1794, 1801, 1846, \$2.50 each; 1795, 1796, 1797, 1800, 1803, \$1 to \$2 each. The others from 10c. to 30c. each.

DIMES.—1804, \$25; 1796 to 1803, inclusive, and 1822, from \$2 to \$3 each; 1809, 1846, \$1 each. The others from 15c. to 50c. each.

TWENTY CENTS.—1875, 40c.; 1876, 50c.; 1877, 1878, \$3 each.

M. R. GAUSE.—The four coins are common, and worth face value only. You failed to give your address.

M. HALE.—The 1839 cent struck over 1836 is sold by dealers at \$3. The regular 1839 has no premium. The other coins are sold at 10c. each.

MRS. A. M. R.—I cannot give addresses of dealers in this column. Ordinary current stamps have little value. Ten million of the present 2c. red are used every day.

CORPORAL P. CONN.—Dealers ask from 15c. to 40c. according to condition.

A. L. CHURCHMAN.—Dealers ask 5c.

R. HITCHENS.—Dealers do not pay premiums at present on any Columbians except the dollar values.

Z. C. FRICK.—Dealers ask 5c. each for the coins mentioned.

DUBUQUE, IOWA.—(No name signed to inquiry).—The 1795 dollar, lettered edge, is worth \$3.50. The other coins about twice face value. Confederate paper money, as a rule, has no value. U.S. fractional currency in good fresh condition is worth twice face. If dirty or crumpled it has no premium value.

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**REHEARSING FOR THE
CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME.**

THE BEAR (at rehearsal). "SEE HERE, DOROTHY, WHEN I BEGIN TO DEVOUR YOU IN THE CHRISTMAS PERFORMANCE, YOU OUGHT TO BE AWFUL SCART, INSTEAD OF GIGGLING."
DOROTHY. "BUT YOU MAKE ME GIGGLE, YOUR WHISKERS TICKLE ME SO."

A WREATH OF CHRISTMAS SMILES.

BY CODDLES AND TODDLES.

C. (1 A.M.). "Is it raining out, Tod?"

T. "Raining! No; it's snowing hard."

C. "I don't think Santa Claus will come, then, 'cause papa said he uses *reindeers* only to pull his sleigh."

T. (2 A.M.). "Cod, I wonder why Santa Claus only comes at night!"

C. "I guess it's because he doesn't want to make his *presents* known."

C. (3 A.M.). "Say, Tod, wake up! I thought you said you were not going to sleep till Santa Claus came."

T. "I didn't go to sleep. I only forgot I was awake."

T. (4 A.M.). "Santa Claus is so long in coming, I think he's mistaken us for somebody he's left presents with."

C. "Probably he's had a *misgiving*, and left them with somebody else."

C. (5 A.M.). "Tod, did you hear that crash?"

T. "No; what was it?"

C. "The day breaking through the window."

T. (6 A.M.). "I wonder what time it is, Cod?"

C. "Don't know; it's so cold, I guess the clock's frozen."

T. "Ha! ha! don't you know a clock has a running spring, and that never freezes?"

C. (7 A.M.). "I wonder where Santa Claus learned to come down chimneys?"

T. "That's easy. He took lessons off that camel that went through the eye of a needle."

T. (8 A.M.). "Look here, Cod, you shouldn't have eaten all little Ethel's buckwheat cakes like that. Mamma's awful angry."

C. "Well, I only did what papa told me, and that was to always take her part."

C. (9 A.M.). "Papa, did Santa Claus ever go to school?"

Papa. "I guess so."

T. "I don't think he had to study hard, 'cause he was a *gifted* scholar before he went."

T. (10 A.M.). "I wonder why Santa Claus gave me this rocking-horse?"

C. "What is the matter with the horse?"

T. "Why, you know all horses have to be broken before they are ridden, and if I break this one, I don't see how I can use him."

C. (11 A.M.). "I am going to have lots of fights with the bicycle Santa Claus gave me."

T. "What's wrong about it?"

C. "Oh, I'll have to give it a blowing up every now and then."

T. (12 M., *in a whisper*). "Cod, that turkey looks fine, doesn't it? Ain't you afraid that when he goes to the next world he'll haunt you?"

C. "No. Turkeys have their *necks twirled* in this."

C. (1 P.M.). "Say, Tod, this plum-pudding reminds me of a river with a dam in it."

T. "Why?"

C. "Oh, because the currants are all stemmed."

T. (2 P.M.). "Cod, mamma said she is sorry she bought the Christmas turkey for dinner."

C. "Did she?"

T. "Yes; mamma said we developed into such fine *turkey gobblers* that we might have been used instead."

C. (3 P.M.). "Papa, Dan couldn't pull this sleigh if he didn't have legs, could he?"

Papa. "No, of course not."

C. "Everything that runs has to have legs."

T. "Oh no, they don't. The runners of this sleigh haven't any legs."

T. (4 P.M.). "Did you ever see any peddlers in the Park, papa? Cod says there's lots of them."

Papa. "I never noticed any."

C. "Oh yes, papa! there are scores of bicycle-pedallers here every day."

C. (5 P.M.). "Did you know even old Father Time made us a Christmas gift of an hour to-day?"

T. "What hour is that, Tod?"

C. "Why, the *present* one."

T. (6 P.M.). "You'd better look out for those turkey patties, Tod. They're dangerous, and might go off."

C. "What's the matter with them?"

T. "They're full of *fowl in pieces*."

C. (7 P.M.). "Do you know why Santa Claus is like the weather to-day?"

T. "No."

C. "Because he was *dew* this morning and is *mist* to-night."

T. (8 P.M.). "Cod, look! that Christmas tree is so heavily loaded with presents I'm afraid it will sink through the floor."

C. "Papa will start the candles on it in a minute, and then it will grow much lighter."

C. (9 P.M.). "That little girl over there borrowed a face to come to our party to-night."

T. "What makes you think that?"

C. "I heard mamma say she had her father's eyes and her mother's nose and chin."

T. (10 P.M.). "We've taken pains to eat so many good things to-day, I guess we'll have to do without to-morrow."

C. "Oh, we'll get something to-morrow for our pains."

C. (11 P.M.). "Mamma, Time takes wings on Christmas day like butterflies on hot cakes. Can't you stop the clock for an hour?"

Mamma. "Why don't you ask papa?"

C. "'Cause you told me time stops for no man."

T. (12 M.). "Good-night, papa; we're tucked in all right."

Papa. "Now, boys, go to sleep."

C. "We're going to. Uncle Jack said there'd be a big war in us when the turkey and plum-pudding discovered each other, and so we're going to rest before the fight."

FOOTNOTES:

[\[1\]](#) Begun in HARPER'S ROUND TABLE No. 836.

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